

QUESTION IX

THE DIVINE PERSONS

THERE are nine points of inquiry. (1) Of the Person as compared with the essence, subsistence and hypostasis. (9.) What is a person? (3) Can there be a Person in God? (4) In God does this word Person mean something relative or something absolute? (5) Are there a number of Persons in God? (6) Is it right to predicate Person plurally in God? (7) How are numeral terms predicated of God, positively or in a removing sense? (8) Is there diversity in God? (9) Are there only three Persons in God, or more or less than three?

Q. IX: ARTICLE I

The Persons As Compared to the Essence, Subsistence and Hypostasis

[Sum. Th. I, Q. xxix, A. 2]

WE are inquiring about the divine Persons, and the first point of inquiry is about the Persons in comparison with the essence, subsistence and hypostasis: and it would seem that they are absolutely the same.

1. Augustine (De Trin. vii, 3) says that the Greeks mean the same when they acknowledge three hypostases in God, as the Latins when they acknowledge three Persons. Wherefore hypostasis and Person signify the same.

2. But it will be replied that the person differs from the hypostasis in that the latter signifies an individual of any nature in the genus of substance, whereas a person denotes an individual of none but a rational nature.

On the contrary, Boethius says (De Duab. Nat.) that the Greeks employ the term hypostasis to denote only an individual of rational nature. If, then, person signifies an individual of rational nature, hypostasis and person are absolutely the same.

3. Names are taken from our idea of the things they signify. Now individuality conveys the same idea in things of a rational nature as in other substances. Therefore an individual of rational nature should not have a special name rather than other individuals in the genus of substance, as though there were a difference between hypostasis and person.

4. Subsistence is taken from subsisting. Now nothing subsists besides individuals in the genus of substance, in which are accidents and second substances, namely genus and species (Praedic.).

Therefore only individuals in the genus of substance are subsistences. But an individual in the genus of substance is a hypostasis or person. Therefore subsistence is the same as hypostasis and person.

5. It will be replied that genera and species in the genus of substance subsist, since to subsist belongs to them according to Boethius (loc. cit.).

On the contrary, to subsist is to exist by oneself. Hence what exists only in another does not subsist. Now genera and species are only in something else: for they are only in 'first substances,' and if these latter be removed, nothing of the former can possibly remain (Praedic. Substantia). Hence to subsist does not belong to genera and species, but only to individuals in the genus of substance: so that we must still conclude that subsistence is the same as hypostasis.

6. Boethius, (Comment. Praedic.) says that οὐσία, i.e. essence, signifies that which is composed of matter and form. Now this must be an individual, since matter is the principle of individuation. Therefore the essence signifies the individual, and thus person, hypostasis, essence and subsistence are the same.

7. The essence is signified by the definition, since a definition tells us what a thing is. Now the definition of a natural thing that is composed of matter and form, includes not only the form but also the matter, according to the Philosopher (Metaph. vi). Therefore the essence is something composed of matter and form.

8. It will be replied that the essence denotes the common nature, while the other three, namely subsistence, hypostasis and person, signify an individual in the genus of substance. On the contrary, universal and particular are to be found in every genus. Now in other genera there are not different names for the particular and the universal; thus quality and quantity are denominated in the same way whether 'in general or in particular. Neither therefore in the genus of substance should there be different names to denote a universal and a particular substance: wherefore one would think that these terms have the same signification.

On the contrary, Boethius says (Comment. Praed.) that οὐσία, i.e. essence, signifies that which is composed of matter and form; that οὐσιωσις, i.e. subsistence, signifies the form, and hypostasis the matter. Therefore they differ.

Moreover the same conclusion would seem to follow from the fact that the same author (De Duab. Nat.) explains the difference between these terms.

I answer that the Philosopher (Metaph. v) says that substance may be taken in two ways. In one sense it is the ultimate subject which is not predicated of another: and this is the individual in the genus of substance: while in another sense it is the form or nature of a subject. The reason for this distinction is that several subjects may have a common nature; thus several men have in common the nature of man. Hence the need of distinguishing that which is one from that which is multiple: for the common nature is signified by the definition which indicates what a thing is: so that this common nature is called the essence or quiddity. Wherefore whatsoever a thing contains pertaining to the common nature is included in the signification of the essence, whereas this cannot be said of all that is contained in the individual substance. For if whatsoever is in the individual substance were to belong to the common nature, there would be no possible distinction between individual substances of the same nature. Now that which is in the individual substance besides the common nature is individual matter (which is the principle of individuation) and consequently individual accidents which determine this same matter. Accordingly the essence is compared to the individual substance as a formal part thereof, for instance, human nature in Socrates. Hence in things composed of matter and form, the essence is not quite the same as the subject, and consequently it is not predicated of the subject: for we do not say that Socrates is his human nature. On the other hand in simple substances there is no difference between essence and subject, seeing that in them there is no individual matter to individualise the common nature, but their very essence is a subsistence. This is clear from what the Philosopher says (Metaph. vii), and from Avicenna, who says (Metaph.) that a simple thing is its own quiddity. Now two things are proper to the substance which is a subject. The first is that it needs no external support but is supported by itself: wherefore it is said to subsist, as existing not in another but in itself. The second is that it is the foundation to accidents by sustaining them, and for this reason it is said to substand. Accordingly substance which is a subject, inasmuch as it subsists, is called οὐσιωσὶς or subsistence, but inasmuch as it substands it is called hypostasis by the Greeks, and 'first substance' by the Latins. It is clear then that hypostasis and substance differ logically but are one in reality. Essence, however, in material substances is not the same as they really, nor yet is it altogether diverse since it is by way of a formal part: but in immaterial substances it is altogether the same in reality while differing logically. Person adds a definite nature to the hypostasis, since it is nothing more than a hypostasis of rational nature.

Reply to the First Objection. Inasmuch as person adds nothing but the rational nature to the hypostasis, it follows that hypostasis and person are absolutely the same in rational nature; thus seeing that man adds rational to animal, it follows that a rational animal is a man. Hence Augustine's statement is true when he says (De Trin. vii, 4) that Greeks mean the same when they acknowledge three hypostases in God, as the Latins when they acknowledge three Persons.

Reply to the. Second Objection. The word hypostasis in Greek in its proper signification denotes an individual substance of any nature, but through use it has come to, mean only an individual of rational nature.

Reply to the Third Objection. just as it is proper to an individual substance to exist by itself, so is it proper to it to act by itself. For nothing acts but an actual being: for which reason as heat exists not by itself so neither does it act by itself, but the hot thing heats by its heat. Now to act by themselves is becoming in a higher degree to substances of a rational nature than to others: since rational substances alone have dominion over their actions, so that it is in them to act or not to act, while other substances are acted on rather than act themselves. Hence it was fitting that the individual substance of rational nature should have a special name.

Reply to the Fourth Objection. Although nothing subsists but the individual substance which is called a hypostasis, it is not said to subsist for the same reason as it is said to substand: it is said to subsist as not existing in another, and to substand inasmuch as other things are in it. Hence if there were a substance that exists by itself without being the subject of an accident, it could be called a subsistence but not a substance.

Reply to the Fifth Objection. Boethius expresses himself according to the opinion of Plato, who held genera and species to be separate subsistent forms devoid of accidents; and in this view they could be called subsistences but not hypostases. Or we may reply that genera and species are said to subsist, not because they themselves subsist, but because in their natures individuals subsist, apart from all accidents.

Reply to the Sixth Objection. In material substances essence denotes something composed of matter and form; not indeed of individual but of common matter: thus the definition of man which signifies his essence, includes flesh and bones but not this flesh and these bones. On the other hand individual matter is included in the meaning of hypostasis and subsistence in material things.

This suffices for the Reply to the Seventh Objection.

Reply to the Eighth Objection. Accidents are not individualised save by their subjects. Substance alone is individualised by itself and its proper principles; hence it is fitting that only in the genus of substance should the particular have a special name.

The arguments advanced in a contrary sense may be granted. But it must be noted that Boethius in his commentary on the Categories takes these terms in a different sense from that in which they are usually employed and as he uses them in his work *De Duabus Naturis*. Thus he applies the term hypostasis to matter as the first standing principle, whereby the 'first substance' is enabled to underlie accidents: since a simple form cannot be a subject, as he also says (*De Trin.*).

Again he applies the term οὐσιωσις to the form as the principle of being: because by it is a thing actual: while he employs οὐσία or essence as indicating the composite. Whence he shows that in material substances both form and matter are essential principles.

Q. IX: ARTICLE II

What is Meant by A Person?

[Sum. Th. I, Q. xxix, AA. 1, 3]

THE second point of inquiry is the meaning of the word person. Boethius (De Duab. Nat.) defines it as “an individual substance of rational nature”: and it would seem that this definition is incorrect.

1. According to the Philosopher (Metaph. vii) no singular thing can be defined. Now a person is an individual in the genus of substance as already stated. Therefore it cannot be defined.

2. To this it will be replied that although that which is a person is singular, the idea of a person is something common, and this suffices to make it possible to define it.

On the contrary, that which is common to all individual substances of rational nature, is the ‘intention’ of singularity, which is not in the genus of substance. Therefore in the definition of person we should not give substance the place of the genus.

3. But it will be replied that this word person does not denote a mere intention, but an intention together with its subject.

On the contrary, the Philosopher (Metaph. vii) proves that a compound of subject and accident cannot be defined: because such a definition would be nugatory. For seeing that the definition of an accident includes the subject, e.g. nose in the definition of simous, it will be necessary in defining a compound of subject and accident to express the subject twice; once for itself and once for the accident. If, then, person signifies the intention together with the subject it will be futile to define it.

4. The subject of this common intention is an individual. If then person denotes the intention together with its subject, it will still follow that in defining person the individual will be defined, which cannot be done.

5. An intention is not included in the definition of a thing, nor accident in the definition of a substance. Now person denominates a thing and a substance. Therefore it is unfitting to include individual in the definition of person, since it denotes both an intention and an accident.

6. A thing in whose definition substance is expressed as the genus must be itself a species of substance. Now person is not a species of substance, for then it would be condivided with other species of substance. Therefore it is unfitting in defining person to express substance as the genus.

7. Substance is divided into first and second. Now second substance cannot have a place in the definition of person: since a contradiction of terms would be involved in saying individual substance, inasmuch as 'second substance' is a universal substance. Likewise it cannot denote a 'first substance,' for a 'first substance' is an individual substance, so that it would be futile to add individual to substance in defining person. Therefore it is unfitting to include substance in the definition of person.

8. The term subsistence is seemingly more akin than substance to person: thus we say that there are three subsistences in God, as likewise three Persons: whereas we do not say there are three substances, but one. Therefore it were better to define person as a subsistence than as a substance.

9. If you multiply the thing defined you multiply the genus included in the definition: thus many men are many animals. Now there are three persons and not three substances in God. Therefore substance should not be expressed as the genus in the definition of person.

10. Rational is a difference of animal. Now person is to be found in things that are not animals, viz. in the angels and in God. Therefore rational should not be expressed as the difference in defining person.

11. Nature is only in movable things, since it is the principle of movement (Phys. ii, 1). Now essence is in things both movable and immovable. Therefore it were better in defining person to include essence rather than nature, seeing that person is found to be both in movable and immovable things, since there are persons in men, angels and God.

12. The definition should be convertible with the thing defined. Now not every individual substance of rational nature is a person. For the divine essence qua essence is not a person, else in God there would be one Person even as there is one essence. Therefore the aforesaid definition of person is unsuitable.

13. Human nature in Christ is an individual substance of rational nature: for it is neither an accident nor a universal substance, nor is it of irrational nature: and yet in Christ it is not a person, since it would follow that the divine Person in assuming human nature assumed a human person. Thus there would be two persons in Christ, the divine Person assuming and the human person assumed, which is the heresy of Nestorius. Therefore not every individual substance of rational nature is a person.

14. The soul separated by death from the body is not said to be a person; yet it is an individual substance of rational nature. Therefore this is not a suitable definition of person.

I answer that as explained above it is reasonable that the individual in the genus of substance should have a special name: because a substance is individualized by its proper principles, and not by something extraneous as an accident is by its subject. Again it is reasonable that among individual substances the individual of rational nature should have a special name, because as stated above it belongs to it properly and truly to act by itself. Wherefore just as the word hypostasis according to the Greeks, or 'first substance' according to the Latins is the special name of an individual in the genus of substance, even so the word person is the special name of an individual of rational nature: so that person is a special name under both these heads. Hence to indicate that it is in a special manner an individual in the genus of substance, it is stated that it is an individual substance; and to indicate that it is in a special manner (an individual) of rational nature it is added of rational nature. Accordingly by describing it as a substance we exclude accidents from the notion of person, for no accident can be a person, and by adding individual we exclude genera and species in the genus of substance, since they cannot be called persons: and by adding of rational nature we exclude inanimate bodies, plants and dumb animals which are not persons.

Reply to the First Objection. Three points are to be noted in an individual substance: first, the generic and specific nature existing in the individual: second, such a nature's mode of existence, inasmuch as the generic and specific nature in the individual substance exists as proper to that individual and not as common to many: third, the principle whence arises this mode of existence. Now just as a nature considered in itself is common, so also is that nature's mode of existence: for we do not find human nature existing in things except as individualized in this or that man: since there is not a man that is not a particular man, except in the opinion of Plato who posited separate

universals. But the principle of that mode of existence, namely the principle of individuation, is not common, but differs in each individual: for this particular thing is individualized by this matter, and that one by that matter. Accordingly just as the term denoting the nature is common and definable, e.g. man or animal, so too is the term denoting the nature together with such a mode of existence, e.g. hypostasis or person. On the other hand the term that includes in its signification a determinate principle of individuality, is neither common nor definable, e.g. Socrates or Plato.

Reply to the Second Objection. Not only is the intention of singularity common to all individual substances, but also the generic nature together with that particular mode of existence. In this way the term hypostasis denotes a nature of the genus substance as individualized; while the term Person denotes only a rational nature with that particular mode of existence. For this reason neither hypostasis nor person is a term of intention, like singular and individual, but denotes a thing only, and not a thing together with an intention.

This suffices for the Replies to the Third and Fourth Objections.

Reply to the Fifth Objection. Whereas the essential differences of things are often unknown and unnamed, we are sometimes under the necessity of employing accidental differences to denote substantial distinctions, as the Philosopher teaches (*Metaph. viii*). Thus it is that individual is included in the definition of person, in order to indicate an individual mode of existence.

Reply to the Sixth Objection. The division of substance into 'first' and 'second' is not a division into genus and species, since 'second' substance covers nothing that is not covered by 'first' substance: but it is a division of a genus according to different modes of existence. Thus 'second' substance denotes the generic nature in itself absolutely, while 'first' substance signifies that nature as individually subsistent: wherefore the division is analogous rather than specific. Accordingly person is contained in the genus substance, although not as a species, but as defining a specific mode of existence.

Reply to the Seventh Objection. Some hold that substance is included in the definition of person, inasmuch as it signifies a hypostasis; but since the definition of hypostasis includes individual as opposed to community of universality and to part (for no universal or part of a thing, e.g. a hand or a foot, can be called a hypostasis) they say that individual is added in the definition of person, inasmuch as individual excludes the community of assumability: for they hold that human nature in Christ is a hypostasis but not a person. Wherefore, say they, to exclude assumability, individual is added in the definition of person. This, however, would seem contrary to the intention of Boethius who (*De Duab. Nat.*) by the term individual excludes universals from the definition of Person. Hence it is better to say that in the definition of person substance does not stand for hypostasis but for that which is common to 'first' substance, i.e. hypostasis and 'second'

substance, and is divided into both: so that this common (substance) by the addition of individual is narrowed down to the hypostasis, and thus to say: An individual substance of rational nature, is the same as to say a hypostasis of rational nature.

Reply to the Eighth Objection. In view of what we have just said, this argument does not prove. Substance does not stand for hypostasis, but for that which is common to all substance in whatever sense it be taken. If, however, substance were to stand for hypostasis the objection would, remain inconclusive: because the substance that is a hypostasis, is more akin to person than is subsistence, since person conveys the idea of subject like a 'first' substance, and not merely the idea of subsistence, as subsistence does. But seeing that the term substance is employed even by the Latins to denote the essence, therefore in order to avoid error we do not speak of three substances, as we do of three subsistences. The Greeks, however, who have the word hypostasis as distinct from οὐσία do not hesitate to acknowledge three hypostases in God.

Reply to the Ninth Objection. just as we speak of three Persons in God so may we speak of three individual substances: but of only one substance that is the essence.

Reply to the Tenth Objection. Rational is the difference of animal, inasmuch as reason whence it is taken denotes discursive knowledge, such as is in angels but not in man nor in God. But Boethius takes rational in a broad sense for intellectual, and this is common to man, angels and God.

Reply to the Eleventh Objection. In the definition of person nature is not to be taken according as it is the principle of movement, in which sense it is defined by the Philosopher (Phys. ii, i) but as defined by Boethius (De Duab. Nat.) according as it is the specific difference giving each thing its form. And since the difference completes the definition and confines the thing defined to its species, it follows that the term nature is more suitable in the definition of person which is special to certain substances, than the term essence which is most common.

Reply to the Twelfth Objection. In the definition of person individual signifies that which is not predicated of several; and in this sense the divine essence is not an individual substance by predication, inasmuch as it is predicated of several persons, although it is individual in itself. However, Richard of S. Victor (De Trin. iv, 18, 23) amends the definition of Boethius as applied to the divine Persons; and says that a person is the incommunicable existence of the divine nature, so as to indicate by the term incommunicable that the divine essence is not a Person.

Reply to the Thirteenth Objection. Seeing that an individual substance is something complete existing by itself, human nature in Christ, inasmuch as it was assumed into the divine Person, cannot be called an individual substance such as is a hypostasis, any more than a hand, a foot or

anything that does not subsist by itself apart from anything else: and for this reason it does not follow that it is a person.

Reply to the Fourteenth Objection. The separated soul is a part of rational nature and not a whole rational human nature: wherefore it is not a person.

Q. IX: ARTICLE III

Can There Be A Person in God?

[Sum. Th. I, Q. xxix, A. 3]

THE third point of inquiry is whether there can be a person in God: and seemingly the reply should be in the negative.

1. According to Boethius (De Duab. Nat.) the word person is taken from personating, for masked men were called persons, because they personated something in comedies and tragedies. But it is unbecoming for God to be masked except perhaps metaphorically speaking. Therefore the term person should not be applied to God except perhaps metaphorically.

2. As Damascene says (De Fide Orth. i, 1, 2, 4), it is impossible for us to know what any of the things are which we ascribe to God, as regards the sense in which they apply to him. Yet what a person is we know by the above-given definition (A. 2). Therefore person is not applicable to God, at least in the sense of the aforesaid definition.

3. God is not in a genus: because since he is infinite he cannot be confined within the limits of any genus. Now person signifies something in the genus of substance. Therefore person is not to be applied to God.

1 4. There is no composition in God. But person signifies something composite: for an individual of human nature, which is a person, is extremely composite: besides, the parts of the definition of person show that person is a composite thing. Therefore there is no person in God.

5. There is no matter in God. But matter is the principle of individuation. Since then a person is an individual substance, the term cannot be applied to God.

6. Every person is a subsistence. But God cannot be called a subsistence, for he is not subject to anything. Therefore he is not a person.

7. Person is comprised under hypostasis. Now there cannot be a hypostasis in God, since there are no accidents in him, and hypostasis denotes the subject of an accident as stated above (A. i). Therefore there is no person in God.

The contrary is plain from the authority of Athanasius in the Creed, *Quicumque vult*, etc., and of Augustine (*De Trin.* vii, 6), and from the general usage of the Church who being taught of the Holy Spirit cannot err.

I answer that, as stated above, person denotes a certain nature with a certain mode of existence. Now the nature which person includes in its definition is of all natures the most exalted, to wit that nature which is intellectual in regard to its genus. Likewise the mode of existence signified by the word person is most exalted, namely that a thing exists by itself. Since then whatsoever is most excellent in creatures should be attributed to God, it is becoming that the word person should be attributed to God, even as other terms which are said of God properly.

Reply to the First Objection. Two things must be considered in a name: that which it is intended to signify, and that from which it is taken for the purpose of signification. For a name is often given to signify a certain thing, but is taken from an accident or an action or an effect of that thing, and yet these are not the chief signification of the name which denotes rather the very substance or nature of the thing. Thus the word *lapis* (stone) is taken from *laesio pedis* (hurting the foot), yet it does not signify this, but rather a body wherein such an accident is frequently found: so that *laesio pedis* belongs to the etymology of the word *lapis* rather than to its meaning. Accordingly when it is not the intended signification of a term that is appropriate to God, but some property by way of likeness, then such a term is applied to God metaphorically. Thus God is called a lion, not that the lion's nature is to be attributed to God, but on account of the lion's strength. When, however, that which the term signifies is appropriate to God, it is applied to God in its proper sense, for instance, good, wise and the like, although sometimes the source from which such terms are taken is not applicable to God. Thus although to personate as a masked man, whence comes the term person, is not to be attributed to God, yet that which the word signifies, namely that which subsists in an intellectual nature is appropriate to God: and for this reason the term person is ascribed to God in its proper sense.

Reply to the Second Objection. Both the word person and the definition of person given above are applicable to God: not however, so as to be a definition of God, since there is more in God than is signified by the term. Hence the definition of the term does not define what God is.

Reply to the Third Objection. Although God is not in the genus of substance as a species, he belongs to the genus of substance as the principle of the genus.

Reply to the Fourth Objection. It is accidental to person as such that it is composite, because the complement or perfection required for personality is not to be found at once in one simple thing, but requires a combination of several, as is to be observed in men. But in God together with supreme simplicity there is supreme perfection: wherefore in him there is person without composition. As to the parts which combine to make the definition of person they do not argue composition in person except in material substances: and individual, being a negation, does not imply composition through being added to substance. Hence the only composition that remains is that of individual substance, i.e. hypostasis with the nature: which two in immaterial substances are absolutely one and the same thing.

Reply to the Fifth Objection. In material things whose forms are not self-subsistent but adherent to matter the principle of individuation must needs come from matter: whereas immaterial forms, being self-subsistent, are individualized by themselves, because from the very fact that a thing is self-subsistent, it cannot be predicated of several. Consequently there is no reason why there should not be an individual substance and a person in immaterial things.

Reply to the Sixth Objection. Although there is no composition in God by reason whereof we might be able to understand subjection of one thing to another in him, nevertheless by an act of the mind we consider his being apart from his substance as subject to his being, and from this point of view call it subsistence.

Reply to the Seventh Objection. Though there are no accidents in God, there are personal properties of which the hypostases are the subjects.

Q. IX: ARTICLE IV

In God Does the Term 'Person' Signify Something Relative Or Something Absolute?

[Sum. Th. I, Q. xxix, A. 4]

THE fourth point of inquiry is whether this term person signifies something relative or something absolute in God: and seemingly it signifies something absolute.

1. Augustine says (De Trin. vii, 4) that “when John states that there are three who bear witness in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Spirit, if it be asked, Three what? the answer is, Three Persons.” Now the query What? refers to the essence. Therefore in God person signifies the essence.

2. Augustine (ibid. 6) says that in God to be and to be a person are the same. Now in God to be denotes the essence and not a relation. Therefore person does so also.

3. Augustine (loc. cit.) says: “Person is predicated (of the Father) absolutely not with respect to the Son or the Holy Spirit: just as he is called God, great, good or just absolutely.” Now all these denote the essence and not a relation. Therefore person does so also.

4. Augustine (ibid. 4) says that although “the term essence is common to them,” namely the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, so that each one is called the essence, yet the term person is common to them. But relation in God is not common but distinctive. Therefore person does not signify relation in God.

5. It will be replied that in God Person is common logically and not really. On the contrary, there are no universals in God: hence Augustine (ibid. 6) rejects the opinion of those who said that the essence in God is like a genus or species, and Person like a species or individual. Now that which is common logically and not really is common after the manner of a universal. Hence in God Person is common not merely logically but really, so that it cannot denote a relation.

6. A term does not denote things of different genera except equivocally: thus acute is applied equivocally to the sense of taste and to a mathematical figure. Now it is evident that person does not signify a relation in angels and man, but something absolute. Therefore if it signifies a relation in God, it will be employed equivocally.

7. That which is accidental to the thing signified by a term is beside the term’s signification; thus white which is accidental to man is beside the signification of man. Now the thing signified by the word person is an individual substance of rational nature, since according to the Philosopher (Metaph. iv) the description of what a word means is its definition: and it is accidental to such a

substance that it be related to something else. Therefore relation is beside the signification of the word person.

8. It is inconceivable that any term be predicated of a thing to which the meaning of that term is seen to be inappropriate: thus if we understand that a certain thing is not a rational animal it is inconceivable that such a thing be a man. Now Jews and pagans acknowledge God to be a person; yet they do not acknowledge relations in him, whereas we ascribe them to him according to faith. Therefore person does not signify these relations in God.

9. But to this it will be replied that Jews and pagans err in their views about God: and thus we cannot argue from their opinion.—On the contrary neither an erroneous opinion nor truth itself can change the meaning of a word: so that if the word person does not signify relation in the opinion of those who err about God, neither will it do so with those who think aright about him.

10. According to the Philosopher (Peri Herm. i) words are signs of ideas. Now the idea conceived of the word person is the idea of a 'first' substance. Therefore this word person signifies a 'first' substance, than which nothing is more absolute, since it is self-existent. Therefore the word person does not signify a relation, but something absolute.

11. But to this it may be replied that the word person signifies a relation after the manner of a substance.—On the contrary, this is a self-evident proposition: No relation is a substance, just as this: No quantity is a substance, according to the Philosopher (Poster. i). If then the word person signifies the substance as we have already proved, it cannot possibly signify a relation.

12. Opposite terms cannot be true of the same thing. Now self-existence and existence by another are opposite terms. If then person signifies substance which is a self-existent being, it cannot signify a relation.

13. A term that signifies a relation, is referred to some. thing that it co-signifies, for instance, master and servant. Now it is clear that person has no reference to something else. Therefore it does not signify a relation, but something absolute.

14. Person is as it were one by itself (per se una) . Now unity in God regards the essence. Therefore person signifies essence and not relation.

15. To this it will be replied that this word signifies one distinct thing, and since distinction in God arises from relation, person must signify relation.

On the contrary, the Son and Holy Spirit are said to be distinguished by the mode of their origin; because the Son proceeds by way of the intellect as Word, and the Holy Spirit by way of the will, as Love. Therefore distinction in God is not through the relations alone: and consequently it does not follow that person signifies relation.

16. If relation causes distinction in God, while person is something distinct without causing distinction, relation cannot be signified by the word person.

17. The relations in God are called properties: whereas the person is something underlying the properties. Therefore it does not signify relation.

18. There are four relations in God, paternity, filiation, procession, common spiration: for innascibility which is the fifth notion is not a relation. But the word person signifies none of these: because if it signified paternity, it would not be said of the Son; if it signified filiation, it would not be said of the Father; if it signified the procession of the Holy Spirit, it would be said neither of the Father nor of the Son; and if it signified the common spiration, it would not be said of the Holy Spirit. Therefore the word person does not signify relation.

On the contrary Boethius says (De Trin.) that “every term that refers to the Persons signifies relation.” Now no term refers to the persons more than person itself. Therefore the word person signifies relation.

Again, in God under Person are included the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. But these names signify relation. Therefore person does also.

Again, nothing absolute is divided in God. But person is divided. Therefore it is not absolute but relative.

I answer that the term person in common with the absolute names of God is predicated of each Person, and does not in itself refer to anything else, and in common with the names signifying relation it is divided and predicated of several: wherefore it would seem that person admits of both significations absolute and relative. How the name person can be of both significations has been explained in various ways.

Some say that person signifies both, but equivocally. They assert that in itself it expresses the essence absolutely both in the singular and in the plural, like the name God, or good or great: but that owing to the insufficiency of names employed in speaking of God, the holy fathers in the Council of Nicea accommodated the term person so that it could be employed sometimes in a relative sense, especially in the plural, as when we say that Father, Son and Holy Spirit are three Persons, or with the addition of a disjunctive term, as when we say: "One is the Person of the Father, another of the Son," or: "The Son is distinct from the Father in person." And that when it is predicated in the singular absolutely, it may equally signify the essence or the relation, as when we say: "The Father is a person," or: "The Son is a person." Apparently this is the opinion of the Master (I., D. xxv): but this does not seem to be a satisfactory explanation. For it was not without reason taken from the very signification of the word, that the holy fathers inspired by God chose this term to express a profession of the true faith; and all the more seeing that they would have provided an occasion for error in affirming three Persons, if the word person signified the essence absolutely.

Wherefore others said that it expresses at the same time essence and relation but not equally; the one directly and the other indirectly. Some of them maintained that it expresses the essence directly and the relation indirectly: while others took the contrary view. Yet neither opinion solves the difficulty: for if it signifies the essence directly it should not be predicated in the plural, and if it signifies the relation directly, it should not be predicated absolutely or of each Person. Hence others said that it signifies both directly: and some of them said that it, expresses equally both essence and relation, and neither more than the other.

But this is unintelligible: since that which does not signify one thing signifies nothing: wherefore according to the Philosopher (Metaph. iv) every term signifies one thing in one sense. Hence others said that it signifies relation as affecting the essence: but it is difficult to see how this is possible inasmuch as relations do not determine the essence in God. And so others said that the relation does not express the absolute, i.e. the substance which is essence, but the substance which is hypostasis, since this is determined by a relation. This is indeed true, but does not make us any wiser, seeing that the meaning of hypostasis or subsistence is less clear than that of person.

Accordingly to elucidate the matter it must be noted that, according to the Philosopher (Metaph. iv), the proper definition of a term is its signification. Now when a term is predicated of a thing which is directly included in the signification of that term as the determinate in the indeterminate, that thing is said to be classed under that term: but if it is not directly included in the term's signification it is said to be coupled with it. Thus animal signifies a sensible animate substance, and white signifies a colour that dilates the sight: while man is included directly in the idea of animal as the determinate in the indeterminate; for man is a sensible animate substance, having a rational soul: and is included under white, not directly, however, since white is outside his essence. Hence man is classed under the term animal, but is coupled with the term white. And since that which

comes under a common denomination is related to the common name as the determinate to the indeterminate, that which was included becomes the thing signified by the addition of a determining word to the common term: thus a rational animal is a man. But we must observe that a thing is signified in two ways, formally and materially. Formally a term signifies that which it was chiefly intended to signify and this is the definition of the term: thus man signifies something composed of a body and a rational soul. Materially a term signifies that which is requisite for that definition: thus man signifies something that has a heart, brain and such parts as are required in order that the body be animated with a rational soul.

Accordingly we reply that the term person signifies nothing else but an individual substance of rational nature. And since under an individual substance of rational nature is contained the substance, individual, i.e. incommunicable and distinct from others, whether of God, of man or of angels, it follows that a divine Person must signify something subsistent and distinct in the divine nature, just as a human person signifies something subsistent and distinct in human nature: and this is the formal signification of a person whether divine or human. Since, however, that which is distinct and subsistent in human nature is nothing else than something individualized and differentiated from others by individual matter, it follows that this is the material signification when we speak of a human person. But the only thing that is distinct and incommunicable in the divine nature is relation, since all that is absolute is common and undivided. Now in God relation is really the same as the essence. And as in God essence is identical with the one who has the essence (e.g. the Godhead is identical with God), so also is relation the same as the one who is related. Consequently relation is the same as that which is distinct and subsists in the divine nature. It is evident then that person commonly speaking signifies an individual substance of rational nature; while a divine person in its formal signification denotes a distinct being subsistent in the divine nature. And seeing that this can be nothing else but a relation or a relative being, it follows that in its material signification it denotes a relation or a relative being. Hence it may be said that it signifies a relation by way of substance not qua essence but qua hypostasis, even as it signifies a relation not qua relation but qua relative: e.g. as signifying Father not as signifying paternity. For in this way the signified relation is included indirectly in the signification of the divine Person, which is nothing but something distinct by a relation and subsistent in the divine essence.

Reply to the First Objection. What ? queries not only the essence but also sometimes the supposite, for instance: What swims in the sea? Fish. And so the answer to what? is the person.

Reply to the Second Objection. It is on account of the mode of signification of this word person, that Augustine says: "In God to be and to be a person are the same." For it does not signify by way of relation as Father and Son do.

Reply to the Third Objection. It is due to the formal signification of person that it is predicated absolutely without reference to another.

Reply to the Fourth Objection. In God essence is common in reality, but person only logically, like the word relation.

Reply to the Fifth Objection. In God there are no differences of being since there is but one being in him. Now this is incompatible with the idea of universal, wherefore there is no universal in him, although there is in him one thing logically and not really.

Reply to the Sixth Objection. The fact that person designates one thing in God and another in man must be referred to a difference in suppositality rather than in the signification of the word person: and equivocation arises from a difference in signification but not in suppositality.

Reply to the Seventh Objection. Although relation is accidental to the common signification of Person, it is not accidental to the divine Person, as we have proved above.

Reply to the Eighth Objection. This argument considers the formal and not the material signification of the term: and the same answer applies to the Ninth Objection.

Reply to the Tenth Objection. A 'first' substance is said to be absolute as being independent of another. In God, however, the relative term does not exclude the absolute that depends on another, but the absolute that is not related to another.

Reply to the Eleventh Objection. This proposition, No relation is a substance is self-evident if it refer to relation and substance that are in a genus. God, however, is not confined within the limits of a genus, but contains in himself the perfections of all genera. Wherefore relation and substance are not really distinct in him.

Reply to the Twelfth Objection. Self-existent is opposed to non-self-existent and not to that which is related to another.

Reply to the Thirteenth Objection. The word person does not itself refer to a relation, but by its mode of signification.

Reply to the Fourteenth Objection. In God one is common to essence and relation: thus we say that the essence is one, and that the Father is one.

Reply to the Fifteenth Objection. It may be that this different mode of procession whereby the Son is said to proceed by way of intellect, and the Holy Spirit by way of will, does not suffice for a personal distinction between the Holy Spirit and the Son, since in God will and intellect are not really distinct. If, however, it be granted that this suffices to make a distinction between them, it is clear that each is distinct from the Father by a relation, in that one of them proceeds from the Father by generation, the other by spiration, and these relations constitute their Persons.

Reply to the Sixteenth Objection. just as relation signifies as causing distinction in God, so is that which is related signified as being distinct. Now in God relation and the thing related are not distinct, as neither are essence and that which is: hence in God that which distinguishes and that which is distinct are one and the same.

Reply to the Seventeenth Objection. In God property is not an accident, but is really the same as the thing whose property it is: although it differs therefrom logically. Accordingly person does not signify relation as a property, but as the essence underlying the property.

Reply to the Eighteenth Objection. Although there cannot be a universal without singulars, it can be understood apart from them and consequently signified. Hence it follows that if there are no singulars there is no universal: but it does not follow that unless some one singular be misunderstood or signified amiss, the universal is not understood or signified. Thus the word man does not signify any one individual man but only man in general: and in like manner the word person, although it does not signify paternity or filiation or common spiration or procession, it nevertheless signifies relation in general in the way already explained, even as the word relation does in its own particular way.

Q. IX: ARTICLE V

Are There Several Persons in God?

[Sum. Th. I, Q. xxx, A. i]

THE fifth point of inquiry is whether there are several persons in God: and seemingly there are not.

1. Boethius says (De Trin.): That is truly one in which there is no number. But God is most truly one. Therefore number is not in him.

2. It will be replied that in God there is not number simply but a number of persons.

On the contrary, from a qualified statement we may always infer a simple statement provided the qualification has not the effect of diminishing: thus from the proposition, There is a white man, it follows that there is a man, but from the proposition, There is a dead man, it does not follow that there is a man. Now when we say a number of persons the qualification does not diminish since person is something most complete. Therefore if in God there is a number of persons, it follows that there is number simply.

3. Unity is opposed to number according to the Philosopher (Metaph. x, text 20). But opposite things are not in the same subject. Since then in God there is supreme unity there cannot be number or plurality in him.

4. Wherever there is number there is plurality of units and where there are several units there is manifold being, because the being of one unit is distinct from the being of another unit. If then there be number in God there must be manifold being and manifold essence; which is clearly false.

5. just as unity is undivided so is there division in number. But there cannot be division in God since there is no composition in him. Therefore there cannot be number in God.

6. Every number has parts, for it is composed of units. But there are no parts in God, since there is no composition in him. Therefore number is not in God.

7. We should not attribute to God anything wherein the creature differs from him. Now the creature differs from God in that it is produced in, a certain number, according to Wisdom xi, 21 : Thou hast ordered all things in measure and number and weight. Therefore we should not ascribe number to God.

8. Number is a species of quantity. But there is no quantity in God, inasmuch as if any quantitative expression were predicated of God he would be substantially changed, as says Boethius (De Trin.).

Therefore either there is no number in God, or it belongs to his substance; which is contrary to the faith.

9. Wheresoever is number there are those things to which number is liable, such as addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, and the like which result from number. But these cannot be in God. Therefore number cannot be in God.

10. Every number is finite. Therefore the infinite cannot be numbered. Since then God is infinite there cannot be number in him.

11. To this it might be replied that God though infinite to us is finite to himself.

On the contrary, that which belongs to God in himself is truer than that which belongs to him as compared to us. If then God is finite to himself and infinite to us he is more truly finite than infinite: and this is clearly false.

12. According to the Philosopher (Metaph. x) number is multitude measured by unity. But God is a measure, himself unmeasured. Therefore no number is in God.

13. In a nature that differs not from its supposite, it is impossible to have several supposites of that nature: since for this reason is it possible to have several men in the one human nature, that the individual man is not his own humanity: wherefore the multiplication of individuals in the one human nature is consequent to the diversity of individual principles, which are not part of the common nature. Whereas in immaterial substances wherein the very nature of the species is the subsisting supposite, there cannot be several individuals of one species. Now in God there is the most complete identity of nature and supposite, because the divine being itself which is the divine nature, is subsistent. Therefore there cannot be in God several supposites or persons.

14. Person is the name of a thing: hence where there is not a number of things there is not a number of persons. Now there is not a number of things in God: for Damascene says (De Fide Orth. i, xi) that in God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are really one thing, though logically and in our way of thinking they are distinct. Therefore in God there is not a number of persons.

15. There cannot be a number of things in one without composition. Now God is one: wherefore if in God there are several persons which is the same as several things, it follows. that there is composition in him, and this is incompatible with his simplicity.

16. The absolute is more perfect than the relative. Now the absolute properties, namely the essential attributes such as wisdom, justice and so on, do not constitute so many persons in God. Neither therefore do the relative properties such as paternity and filiation.

17. That which differentiates things from one another stands in relation to them as their constituent difference. If then the divine persons are distinguished by their relations, these latter must be the constituent differences of the persons; and consequently there will be composition in the divine persons, inasmuch as the difference constitutes the species by being added to the genus.

18. Things that are distinguished by specifically different forms must themselves differ specifically: thus man and horse differ specifically as being rational and irrational. Now paternity and filiation are specifically different relations. If then the divine persons are distinguished by the relations only, they must differ specifically, and consequently will not be of one nature; which is against the faith.

19. It is inconceivable that several supposites have one being. Now in God there is but one being. Therefore there cannot be several supposites or persons in him.

20. Since creation is the proper act of God alone, it must proceed from each supposite of the divine nature. Now it is impossible that this action, inasmuch as it is one, proceed from several supposites, because one action is from but one agent. Therefore there cannot be several supposites or persons in the divine nature.

21. Here below, difference in properties does not make a difference in supposites: thus one supposite of human nature is not distinct from another through the one being white and the other black; but through the diversity of individual matter which is the substance of each individual. If then in God there is no distinction save that which arises from relative properties, there cannot be in him a number of supposites or persons.

22. The highest creatures are more like God than the lowest. Now in the lowest creatures there are several supposites in one nature, whereas in the highest creatures, which are the heavenly bodies, there are not. Therefore in God there are not several persons in one nature.

23. The Philosopher (*De Coelo et Mun.* i) says that when the whole perfection of a species is in one supposite there are not several supposites of that nature, and that for this reason there is but one world because it consists of its whole matter. Now the whole perfection of the divine nature is in one supposite. Therefore in the one nature there are not several supposites or persons.

24. To this it may be replied that the fullness of joy requires the companionship of several in the divine nature, because there is no pleasure in possessing a thing unless we share it with a companion, according to Boethius. Moreover perfect love is to love another as oneself.—On the contrary, to depend on another for the fullness of one's joy and love is an indication of insufficient goodness in oneself. Hence the Philosopher says (*Ethic.* ix, 4) that the wicked through finding no pleasure in their own company seek the companionship of others: whereas the good seek to commune with themselves through finding pleasure in so doing. Now the divine nature cannot lack a sufficiency of goodness. Wherefore since one supposite of the divine nature has in himself all fullness of joy and love, there is no need to put several supposites, or persons in God.

On the contrary it is written (1 Jo. v, 7): There are three who give testimony in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Spirit.

Again Athanasius says in the Creed: "All the three Persons are co-eternal and co-equal with one another." Therefore in God there is a number of persons.

I answer that the plurality of persons in God is an article of faith, and natural reason is unable to discuss and adequately understand it though we hope to understand it in heaven when we shall see God in his essence, and faith will be succeeded by vision. The holy fathers, however, being pressed by those who gainsaid the faith, were compelled to discuss this and other matters of belief, yet humbly and reverently withal, and avoiding any pretence to comprehension. Nor is such a discussion without its use since it enables the mind to perceive some glimpse of the truth sufficient to steer clear of error. Wherefore Hilary (*De Trin.* ii) says: "Believing this," namely the plurality of persons in God, "set forth, run, persevere, and though I may know that you will not reach, I shall acclaim your progress. He who religiously pursues the infinite, although he will never catch up with it, will progress so long as he continues."

In order then to throw some light on this question and especially in accordance with the elucidations of Augustine, we must observe that we must attribute to God every perfection that is in creatures, as regards the essence of the perfection absolutely but not as regards the way in which it is in this or that one. Thus goodness or wisdom is not in God as an accident as it is in us, although in him is supreme goodness and perfect wisdom. Now in creatures nothing is more excellent or more perfect than to understand: a sign of which is that of all creatures intellectual substances are the highest and are said to be made to God's image in respect of their intelligence.

It follows then that understanding is in God as well as whatsoever is essential thereto, although it belongs to God in one way and to creatures in another. Now for the act of understanding it is essential that there be one who understands and something understood. And that which is understood in itself is not the thing that is known by the intellect, since this thing is at one time only potentially understood and is outside the person who understands, as when a man understands a material thing, for instance a stone, an animal or something of the kind: whereas the thing understood must be in the person who understands and must be one with him. Now the intelligible species is the likeness of the thing understood, which likeness informs the intellect for the purpose of understanding. For the intellect cannot understand except in so far as it is actuated by this likeness, just as nothing else can act as being in potentiality but only as actuated by a form. Accordingly this likeness is as the principle in the act of understanding, just as heat is the principle of calefaction, and not as the term of understanding. Consequently that which is the first and direct object in the act of understanding is something that the intellect conceives within itself about the thing understood, whether it be a definition or proposition according to the two operations of the intellect mentioned in *De Anima*, III. Now this concept of the intellect is called the interior word and is signified by means of speech: for the spoken word does not signify merely the thing understood, or the intelligible form thereof or the act of understanding, but the concept of the intellect through which it signifies the thing: as when I say, man, or, Man is an animal. And in this respect it matters not whether the intellect understands itself, or something else: since just as when it understands another thing from itself it forms a concept of that thing which is expressed orally, so also when it understands itself it forms a concept of itself which also can be expressed by word of mouth. Since then in God there is the act of understanding, and since in understanding himself he understands all other things, it follows that there must be in him an intellectual concept which is absolutely essential to the act of understanding. And if we were able to comprehend the divine act of understanding so as to grasp what it is and how it takes place, just as we grasp our own act of understanding, the conception of the divine Word would not surpass reason as neither does the conception of the human word. We can, however, know what it is not and understand how it is not: and thus we are able to know the difference between the Word conceived by God and the word conceived by us. Thus first of all we know that in God there is but one act of understanding and not many as in us: for our act of understanding a stone is distinct from our act of understanding a plant: whereas God by one act understands himself and all else. Hence our intellect conceives many words, but the Word conceived by God is but one. Again our intellect frequently understands both itself and other things imperfectly; whereas God's act of understanding cannot be imperfect. Hence God's Word is perfect, representing all things perfectly, while our word is often imperfect. Again, in our intellect, understanding and being are distinct, wherefore the word conceived in our intellect, since it proceeds from our intellect as such, is not united to it in nature but in the act of understanding. Whereas God's act of understanding is his being, so that the Word which proceeds from God as understanding proceeds from him as existing: and for this reason the conceived Word has the same essence and nature as the conceiving intellect. And because that which in living things is the recipient of nature, is said to be begotten and is called a son, the Word of God is 'said to be begotten and is called the Son. Whereas our word cannot be described as begotten of our intellect or as its son, except metaphorically.

Accordingly since the word of our intellect is distinct from our intellect in two respects, namely in that it proceeds from it, and is of a different nature, and seeing that difference of nature must be removed from the divine Word (Q. viii, A. i), the only remaining distinction is that it proceeds from another. And whereas difference causes number it follows that the only number in God is that of relations. Now in God relations are not accidents, but each one is the divine essence in reality. Wherefore each of them like the divine essence is subsistent: and just as the Godhead is the same thing as God, so is Paternity the same thing as the Father, and therefore the Father is the same thing as God. Accordingly the number of relations is the number of things subsistent in the divine nature, and these are the three persons as appears from the preceding Article. For this reason then we place a number of persons in God.

Reply to the, First Objection. By these words Boethius means to exclude number from the divine essence: for this is the point of his discussion.

Reply to the Second Objection. Although the persons considered as subsistent do not detract from the idea of number, they do so considered as relations: because relative distinction is the least of all distinctions just as relation itself of all the genera has the least being.

Reply to the Third Objection. Unity and number are both attributed to God but not in the same respect: unity in respect of the essence, number in respect of the persons: or unity in respect of absolutes, number in respect of relations.

Reply to the Fourth Objection. Since plurality of units is caused by a distinction, if this distinction be one of being the units must differ in being: but where the distinction is one of relation, the units that compose the number must differ only relatively from one another.

Reply to the Fifth Objection. Any kind of distinction suffices to cause a plurality of like kind. Wherefore as in God there is no distinction in that which is absolute (which distinction is inseparable from composition) but only a distinction of relations, even so in God there is not plurality in respect of what is absolute, but only in respect of relations, as already stated.

Reply to the Sixth Objection. The parts of a number are always units if we speak of absolute number whereby we count. But if we take number as it is in things, then the idea of whole and part does not apply to number itself but to the things numbered. Now the different relations in God are not parts: thus fatherhood and sonship are not parts of Socrates, although he is father of one and son of another. Wherefore neither are the units of the relations compared as parts to the number of relations.

Reply to the Seventh Objection. The creature differs from God in that it is produced in a number of essential principles. But this kind of number is not that of the persons.

Reply to the Eighth Objection. The number which is a species of quantity is caused by a division of a continuous quantity: wherefore just as continuous quantity relates to mathematics, because it is separated from sensible matter logically and not in reality, so also number which is a species of quantity is the subject-matter of arithmetic the principle whereof is unity that is the first measure of quantity. Hence it is plain that number of this kind cannot be in immaterial things; but in them is multitude that is opposed to the unity that is convertible with being: and this is caused by formal division which is into opposite forms whether absolute or relative: and such is number in God.

Reply to the Ninth Objection. Number that is a species of quantity is liable to such things: but this kind of number is not in God, as stated above.

Reply to the Tenth Objection. God is infinite in the perfection of greatness, wisdom and the like, wherefore it is written (Ps. cxlvi, 5) that of his wisdom there is no number: but procession in God, by reason of which there are several divine persons, does not tend to the indefinite, for as Augustine says (De Trin.) the divine generation is not immoderate: therefore neither is the number of persons infinite.

Reply to the Eleventh Objection. God is said to be finite to himself, not that he knows himself to be finite, but because he is compared to himself as we to finite things, in that he comprehends himself.

Reply to the Twelfth Objection. This is the definition of number as a kind of quantity to which the idea of measure is applicable.

Reply to the Thirteenth Objection. In created things the principles of individuality exercise two functions. The one is that they are the principle of subsistence (since the common nature does not subsist by itself except in the individual): and the other is that they distinguish the supposites; of the common nature from one another. But in God the personal properties only distinguish the supposites of the divine nature from one another, while they are not the principles of subsistence of the divine essence (since the divine essence is subsistent in itself) but on the contrary subsist by the essence; thus Paternity is a subsistent thing because the divine essence with which it is identical is a subsistent thing: so that it follows that as the divine essence is God, so is Paternity the Father. And hence it follows likewise that the divine essence is not numerically multiplied by

reason of the multiplicity of its supposites, as happens here below. Because a thing is multiplied on account of that which gives it subsistence: and although the divine essence is so to speak individualized by itself as regards its self-subsistence, yet though it is itself one in number there are several supposites in God mutually distinct by subsistent relations.

Reply to the Fourteenth Objection. If the Father, Son and Holy Spirit differed from one another logically and not really, there would be no reason why one should not be predicated of the other: even so a shirt and an undergarment may be predicated of each other; and in like manner the Father would be the Son and vice versa: which is the heresy of Sabellius. Hence we must reply that Father, Son and Holy Spirit are three things, as Augustine says (*De Doctr. Christ.* i, 5), provided thing be taken for a relative thing: for if it be taken as absolute, then they are but one thing, as again Augustine says. In this sense we must take the words of Damascene where he says that they are really one. And when he says that they differ only logically, this is generally understood to mean relatively. For although a relation as compared with the opposite relation makes a real distinction in God, it does not differ save logically from the divine essence. Moreover relation of all the genera is the least stable in point of reality.

Reply to the Fifteenth Objection. In God plurality of things is plurality of subsistent opposite relations, and this does not cause composition in God: because relation as compared to the divine essence differs not really but only logically. Hence it does not enter into composition with it, as neither does goodness nor any other of the essential attributes: whereas if we compare it with the opposite relation there are several things, but not composition; because opposite relations as such are distinct from each other: and composition is not of distinct things as such.

Reply to the Sixteenth Objection. The essential attributes are in no way opposed to one another as the relations are: wherefore although like the relations they subsist, they do not constitute a plurality of mutually distinct supposites, since plurality follows distinction: and formal distinction arises from opposition.

Reply to the Seventeenth Objection. In God there is no difference between what is signified as a form and what is signified as a supposite: for instance, Godhead and God, Paternity and Father. Hence although the relative properties are by way of constituent differences of the persons, it does not follow that they enter into composition with the persons thus constituted.

Reply to the Eighteenth Objection. Although the Father and the Son are not distinct from each other except by paternity and filiation, it does not follow that because paternity and filiation are specifically different relations in God there is therefore a kind of specific difference between Father and Son: for these relations do not specify the divine persons, but rather distinguish and constitute the supposites. That which specifies the divine persons is the divine nature wherein the

Son is like the Father. Because the begetter begets his like in species and not in individual properties. Accordingly just as Socrates and Plato, even if the only difference between them as individuals were that one is black and the other white (which are specifically different qualities) would not differ themselves specifically; since that which is a species to white and black is not a species to Socrates and Plato: even so the specific difference between paternity and filiation does not cause a specific difference between Father and Son. And yet in God it cannot be said properly that anything differs specifically, inasmuch as species and genus are not in him.

Reply to the Nineteenth Objection. It must by no means be granted that there is more than one being in God: seeing that being always refers to essence and especially in God whose being is his essence. But the relations which distinguish the supposites in God do not add another being to the being of the essence, because they do not enter into composition with the essence, as already stated. And every form that adds being to the substantial being enters into composition with the substance, and its being is accidental, for instance, the being of white and black. Accordingly difference in respect of being follows plurality of supposites, just as difference of essence in creatures: but neither of these obtains in God.

Reply to the Twentieth Objection. Operation issues from the agent in ratio to the form or power that is the principle of the operation: wherefore there is no reason why the one creation should not proceed from the three Persons since they are of one nature and power: thus if three hot things had the same identical heat, one identical heating would issue from them.

Reply to the Twenty-first Objection. The individualizing forms in creatures are not subsistent as in God: hence the comparison fails.

Reply to the Twenty-second Objection. In creatures multiplication of essence entails multiplication of supposites,; but this is not the case in God; wherefore the conclusion does not follow.

Reply to the Twenty-third Objection. Although the Godhead is wholly and perfectly in each of the three Persons according to its proper mode of existence, yet it belongs to the perfection of the Godhead that there be several modes of existence in God, namely that there be one from whom another proceeds yet proceeds from no other, and one proceeding from another. For there would not be absolute perfection in God unless there were in him procession of word and love.

Reply to the Twenty-fourth Objection. This argument takes it for granted that the divine persons differ in essence. For thus the fullness of delight that the Father has in the Son would be in something extrinsic and the Father would not have it in himself; but because the Son is in the

Father as his Word, the Father could not have perfect joy in himself except in the Son; even so a man does not delight in himself except through the concept he has of himself.

Q. IX: ARTICLE VI

In Speaking of God Can the Word 'Person' Be Rightly Predicated in the Plural?

[Sum. Th. I, Q. xxx, A. 4]

THE sixth point of inquiry is whether when we speak of God we may rightly use the word person in the plural: and seemingly not.

1. A person is a substance, as appears from the definition of Boethius. But substance in God is not predicated in the plural. Neither therefore is person.

2. Other absolute names in God are only predicated in the singular, for instance wise, good and so forth. Now the word person is an absolute term. Therefore in God it should not be predicated in the plural.

3. The word person apparently is taken from subsistence, inasmuch as it denotes an individual in the genus substance, and is so to speak one by itself (per se una). Now subsistence would seem to pertain to the essence, and this is not multiplied in God. Therefore the word person should not be predicated in the plural.

4. To this it will be replied that even if subsistence be derived from essence, we can still say that there are three subsistents in God, and likewise three persons.

On the contrary terms that signify the divine essence cannot be predicated in the plural unless they be adjectives which do not take their number from the form signified but from the supposites, whereas the contrary obtains in substantives. Hence we may say that in God there are three eternal, if eternal be an adjective, whereas if it be a substantive then the words of Athanasius are true: "Not three eternal but one eternal." Now person is a substantive and not an adjective. Therefore it should not be predicated in the plural.

5. Although essential adjectives are predicated of God in the plural, the forms signified by them are not predicated in the plural but only in the singular. Thus although in a certain sense we may use the plural in predicating eternal of God, in no way do we speak of three eternities. Therefore although in a sense we may speak of three persons in God, by no means may we say that there are three personalities.

6. just as God signifies one who has Godhead, so a divine person denotes one who subsists in the Godhead. Now just as we speak of three subsisting in the Godhead so do we speak of three having the Godhead. If then this suffices for us to say that there are three persons in God, we may also say that there are three Gods, which is heretical.

7. Boethius (De Trin.) says that there are not three Gods because God does not differ from God in the Godhead. But in like manner seemingly one divine person does not differ from another by a personal difference, since it is common to them to be a person. Therefore person cannot be predicated of God in the plural.

On the contrary Augustine says (De Trin. vii. 4) that when we ask, "what are these three, Father, Son and Holy Spirit?" the reply is: "Three persons." Therefore person is predicated of God in the plural.

Again Athanasius says (loc. cit.) that "one is the person of the Father, another that of the Son, another of the Holy Spirit." Now otherness is the cause of number, therefore person must be predicated of God in the plural.

I answer that substantives, as stated above, take their number from the form signified, and adjectives from the supposites: and the reason of this is that substantives signify after the manner of a substance, while adjectives signify after the manner of an accident which is individualized and multiplied by its subject, but a substance by itself. Accordingly seeing that person is a substantive the possibility of its being predicated in the plural depends on the form signified thereby. Now the form signified by the word person is not the nature absolutely, for in that case man and human person would mean the same thing which is clearly false: but person formally signifies incommunicability or individuality of one subsisting in a nature, as we have clearly explained. Since then there are several properties which cause a distinct and incommunicable being in God, it follows that person is predicated of God in the plural, even as it is predicated of;nan on account of the manifold individualizing principles.

Reply to the First Objection. A person is an individual substance which is a hypostasis: and this is predicated in the plural as is evident from its use in Greek.

Reply to the Second Objection. person is an absolute term from its mode of signification: and yet it signifies a relation, as stated above.

Reply to the Third Objection. The word person indicates not only subsistence which apparently belongs to the essence, but also distinction and incommunicability, which are due to the relative properties in God.

Reply to the Fourth Objection. The form signified by the word person is not the essence taken absolutely, but is that which is the principle of incommunicability or individuation. For this reason is it predicated in the plural, although it is a substantive. And for this reason also, since there are several distinctive properties in God there are said to be several personalities. Wherefore the Reply to the Fifth Objection is clear.

Reply to the Sixth Objection. The word person signifies one that subsists in the divine nature distinctly and incommunicably: whereas the word God signifies one who has the divine nature without reference to distinction or incommunicability: hence the comparison fails.

Reply to the Seventh Objection. Although God differs not from God by a difference in the Godhead, for there is only one Godhead: yet divine person differs from divine person by a difference of personality, since in God personality includes also the property that distinguishes the persons.

Q. IX: ARTICLE VII

Are Numeral Terms Predicated of the Divine Persons?

[Sum. Th. I, Q. xxx, A. 3]

THE seventh point of inquiry is as to how numeral terms are predicated of the divine persons, whether positively or only negatively: and it would seem that they are predicated positively.

1. If they signify nothing positive in God, then by affirming three persons we do not speak of something that is in God. Therefore by denying three persons one would not deny anything that is in God: and consequently one would not say that which is untrue nor would one be a heretic.

2. According to Dionysius (Div. Nom.) things are predicated of God in three ways: negatively, eminently and causally. Now in whichever of these three senses numeral terms are predicated of God they must needs have a positive signification. This is evident if they be predicated eminently or causally: and likewise if they be predicated negatively. For as the same Dionysius says (Coel. Hier. ii; Div. Nom. iv, xi) we do not deny things of God as though he lacked them altogether, but because they are not appropriate to him in the same way as they are to us. Therefore in any way numeral terms must have a positive meaning as applied to God.

3. Whatsoever is predicated of God and creatures is affirmed in a more eminent sense of God than of creatures. Now numeral terms are predicated of creatures positively. Therefore with much more reason are they thus predicated of God.

4. Plurality and unity as implied by the numeral terms when predicated of God are not mere mental concepts, for thus there would not be three persons in God save logically, which belongs to the heresy of Sabellius. Therefore they must be something really in God, and consequently predicated of him positively.

5. As unity is in the genus of quantity, so is good in the genus of quality. Now in God there is neither quantity nor quality nor any accident, and yet goodness is predicated of God not negatively but positively. Therefore unity is predicated of him in the same way, and consequently plurality which is based on unity.

6. There are four transcendentals, namely being, unity, truth and goodness. Now three of these, to wit being, truth and goodness, are predicated of God positively. Therefore unity is also and consequently plurality.

7. Number and magnitude are two species of quantity, namely discrete and continuous quantity. Now magnitude is predicated of God positively (Ps. cxlvi, 5): Great is our Lord and great is his Power. Therefore multitude and unity are also.

8. Creatures are like God inasmuch as they bear a trace of the Godhead. Now according to Augustine (De Trin. vi, 10) every creature bears a trace of the divine Trinity, inasmuch as it is "one

particular thing, informed by a species," and "has a certain order." Therefore the creature is one in its likeness to God. Now one is predicated of a creature positively; and therefore of God also.

9. If one be predicated of God in a privative sense, it follows that it removes something, and this can only be plurality. Now it does not remove plurality, since if there be one person it does not follow that there are not more. Therefore one is not said of God by way of remotion: and consequently neither is number.

10. Privation constitutes nothing: whereas unity constitutes number. Therefore the latter is not predicated in a privative sense.

11. There is no privation in God, since all privation is a defect. Now one is predicated of God. Therefore it does not denote a privation.

12. Augustine says (De Trin. v, 5) that whatsoever is predicated of God indicates either substance or relation. And Boethius (De Trin. iv) says that whatsoever is predicated of God refers to the substance except relative terms. If then numeral terms are predicated of God they must denote either the substance or a relation, and consequently must be predicated positively.

13. One and being are convertible terms and are apparently synonymous. Now being is predicated of God positively. Therefore one is also and consequently number.

14. If one be predicated of God by way of remotion, it must remove number as being contrary thereto. But this cannot be the case, since number is constituted by units: and one contrary is not made up of the other. Therefore one is not predicated of God by way of remotion.

15. If one indicate the removal of number, it follows that one is opposed to number as privation to habit. Now habit is naturally prior to privation: as well as logically, since privation cannot be defined except in reference to habit. Therefore number will precede unity both naturally and logically: which is apparently absurd.

16. If one and number are predicated of God by way of remotion, then one removes number and number removes unity. But this cannot be admitted, since it would lead to a vicious circle, namely that unity is where there is not number, and number where there is not unity, and we should be none the wiser. Therefore we must not say that one and number are said of God privatively.

17. Since one and many are as measure and measured it would seem that they are opposed to each other relatively. Now when terms are relatively opposite both are predicated positively. Therefore both unity and number are predicated of God positively.

1. On the contrary, Dionysius says (Div. Nom. iv, 13) "That Unity with Trinity in which we worship the supreme Godhead is not the same unity or trinity with which we or any other living being are acquainted." Therefore seemingly numeral terms are predicated of God by way of remotion.

2. Augustine says (De Trin. viii, 4): The poor human tongue sought how to express the Three, and it called them substances or persons: not intending to imply that they are different, yet desirous to avoid saying that there is only one. Hence in speaking of God these numeral terms are employed negatively rather than positively.

3. One and many, i.e. number are in the genus of quantity. Now there is no quantity in God, seeing that quantity is an accident and a disposition, of matter. Therefore numeral terms indicate nothing positive in God.

4. To this it will be replied that although quantity as to its generic nature or considered as an accident cannot be in God, yet in its specific nature a certain kind of quantity may be predicated of God, even as a certain kind of quality such as knowledge or justice.

On the contrary only those species of quality can be predicated of God which in their specific nature contain no imperfection, such as knowledge, justice, equity, but not ignorance or whiteness. But all quantity by its specific nature implies imperfection: because since a thing that has quantity is divisible, the various species of quantity are distinguished according to various kinds of division: thus plurality is quantity divisible into non-continuous parts: a line is quantity divisible as to one dimension: while a surface is divisible as to two, and a body as to three. Now division is incompatible with the perfection of divine simplicity. Therefore no quantity as to its specific nature can be predicated of God.

5. But it will be argued that distinction according to the relations which causes the number of persons in God, does not imply perfection in him.

On the contrary every division or distinction causes plurality of some kind. Now not every kind of plurality is that number which is a species of quantity, inasmuch as many and one pervade all the

genera. Hence not any division or distinction suffices to set up number which is a species of quantity, but only quantitative division, and such is not relative division.

6. But it will be objected that every plurality is a species of quantity, and every division suffices to cause a species of quantity.

On the contrary given substance, quantity does not necessarily follow, inasmuch as substance can be without accident. Now given substantial forms only, there follows distinction in substances. Therefore not every distinction causes number, which is an accident and a species of quantity.

7. Discreteness that causes number which is a species of quantity is opposed to continuity. Now discreteness is opposed to continuity because it consists in division of the continuous. Therefore only division of the continuous, which division is impossible in God, causes number that is a species of quantity: so that such a number cannot be predicated of God.

8. Every substance is one. Either then it is one by its essence, or by something else. If by something else, since this again must be one, it must be one either of itself or by something else, and this again by something else. But this cannot go on indefinitely: and hence we must stop somewhere. And it were better to stop at the beginning, so that substance be one of itself. Therefore unity is not something added to substance: and thus seemingly it does not signify anything positively.

9. But it will be argued that a substance is one not by itself but by accidental unity: and unity is one essentially, since the primary notions are named after themselves: thus goodness is good, truth is true and likewise unity is one. —On the contrary these are named after themselves because they are primary forms; whereas second forms are not named after themselves: thus whiteness is not white. Now things which result from addition to others are not primary. Therefore unity and goodness are not additional to substance.

10. According to the Philosopher (Metaph. v) a thing is one in so far as it is undivided. Now to be undivided is nothing positive but only removes something.. Therefore unity is predicated of God not positively but negatively: and the same applies to number which is composed of units.

I answer that about unity and number there are various points which have given rise to various opinions among philosophers. As regards unity it is to be observed that it is the principle of number and that it is convertible with being: and as regards plurality it belongs to a species of quantity called number; moreover, it pervades all the genera like unity, which apparently is opposed to number.

Accordingly some philosophers failed to distinguish between unity which is convertible with being, and unity which is the principle of number, and thought that in neither sense does unity add anything to substance, and that in either sense it denotes the substance of a thing. From this it followed that number which is composed of unities is the substance of all things: and this was the opinion of Pythagoras and Plato.

On the other hand others who failed to distinguish between unity that is convertible with being and unity that is the principle of number held the contrary opinion that in any sense unity adds a certain accidental being to substance: and that in consequence all number is an accident pertaining to the genus of quantity. This was the opinion of Avicenna: and apparently all the teachers of old followed him: for they did not understand by one and many anything else but something pertaining to discrete quantity.

There were others who, considering that there cannot be quantity of any kind in God, maintained that words signifying one or many have no positive signification when attributed to God, but only remove something from him. For they cannot ascribe to him save what they signify, to wit discrete quantity, and this can nowise be in God. Hence according to these one is predicated of God in order to remove the plurality of discrete quantity; and terms signifying plurality are said of God in order to remove that unity which is the principle of discrete quantity. Apparently this was the view of the Master (I., D. xxiv): and granted the principle on which his opinion is based, namely that all multitude signifies discrete quantity, and all unity is the principle of such quantity, this opinion would seem of all the most reasonable. For Dionysius (Coel. Hier. ii) says that we are nearer the truth when we speak of God in the negative, and that all our affirmations about him are figurative. For we know not what God is, but rather what he is not, as Damascene says (De Fid. Orth. i, 4). Hence Rabbi Moses says that whatever we affirm about God is to be taken as removing something from him rather than as placing something in him. Thus we say that God is a living being in order to remove from him that mode of being which inanimate beings have, and not in order to ascribe life to him; since life and all such terms are employed to denote certain forms and perfections of creatures which are far distant from God. And yet this is not altogether true, for as Dionysius says (Div. Nom. xii) wisdom and life and the like are not removed from God as though they were not in him; but because he has them in a higher degree than mind can conceive or words express: and from that divine perfection created perfections come down in an imperfect likeness to it. Wherefore things are said of God according to Dionysius (Myst. Theol. i: Coel. Hier. ii: Div. Nom. ii) not only negatively and causally but also eminently. Still whatever the truth may be with regard to spiritual perfections it is certain that material dispositions are altogether to be removed from God. Wherefore since quantity is a disposition of matter, if numeral terms signify nothing outside the genus of quantity it follows that they are not to be said of God except as removing what they signify, according to the Master's opinion (loc. cit.), and although in his opinion unity removes plurality and plurality unity, this does not involve a vicious circle, because the unity and plurality removed from God are in the genus of quantity, neither of which can be ascribed to God. So that

the unity ascribed to God which removes plurality is not removed, but that other unity which cannot be said of God.

Some, however, through not understanding how affirmative expressions can be predicated of God for the purpose of negation, and not conceiving unity and plurality except as included in the genus of discrete quantity, which they dared not ascribe to God, said that numeral terms are not predicated of God as though they expressed' an idea with an objective reality, but as official expressions positing something in God, namely a kind of syncategorematic distinction, all of which is clearly absurd, since nothing of the kind can be had from the meaning of these terms.

Wherefore others, though holding that unity and multitude are only in the genus of quantity, said that these terms denote something positive in God. They say in effect that it is not unreasonable to ascribe some kind of quantity to God, although the genus is not to be attributed to him: even as certain species of quality, as wisdom and justice are predicated of God, although there cannot be quality in God. But as indicated in an objection (5) there is no comparison: because all the species of quantity from their specific nature are imperfect, but not all the species of quality. Moreover quantity properly speaking is a disposition of matter: so that all the species of quantity are mathematical entities which cannot exist apart from sensible matter, except time and place which are natural entities and which are better described as adjuncts of sensible matter. It is evident then that no species of quantity can be attributed to spiritual things otherwise than metaphorically. Whereas quality follows the form, wherefore certain qualities are altogether immaterial and can be ascribed to spiritual things. Accordingly the above opinions were based on the supposition that the one which is convertible with being is the same with that which is the principle of number, and that there is no plurality but number that is a species of quantity. Now this is clearly false. For since division causes plurality and indivision unity, we must judge of one and many according to the various kinds of division. Now there is a kind of division which altogether transcends the genus of quantity, and this is division according to formal opposition which has nothing to do with quantity. Hence the plurality resulting from such a division, and the unity which excludes such a division, must needs be more universal and comprehensive than the genus of quantity. Again there is a division of quantity which does not transcend the genus of quantity. Wherefore the plurality consequent to this division and the unity which excludes it are in the genus of quantity. This latter unity is an accidental addition to the thing of which it is predicated, in that it measures it: otherwise the number arising from this unity would not be an accident nor the species of a genus. Whereas the unity that is convertible with being, adds nothing to being except the negation of division, not that it signifies indivision only, but substance with indivision: for one is the same as individual being. In like manner the plurality that corresponds to this unity adds nothing to the many things except distinction, which consists in each one not being the other: and this they have not from anything added to them but from their proper forms. It is clear then that one which is convertible with being, posits being but adds nothing except the negation of division. And the number corresponding to it adds this to the things described as many, that each of them is one, and that each of them is not the other, wherein is the essence of distinction. Accordingly then, while one adds to being one negation inasmuch as a thing is

undivided in itself; plurality adds two negations, inasmuch as a certain thing is undivided in itself, and distinct from another; i.e. one of them is not the other.

I say then that in speaking of God we do not predicate the unity and plurality which belong to the genus of quantity, but one that is convertible with being and the corresponding plurality. Wherefore one and many predicate in God that which they signify: but they add nothing besides distinction and indistinction, which is the same as to add negations as explained above. Hence we grant that as regards what they add to the things of which they are predicated, they are attributed to God by way of removal; but in so far as in their signification they include the things of which they are said they are predicated of God positively. We must now reply to the objections on both sides.

Reply to the First Objection. To speak of three persons in God is to indicate a distinction of persons: and to deny this is heresy. But this distinction adds nothing to the distinct persons.

Reply to the Second Objection. It is true that while we remove certain things from God we understand at the same time that these things are predicated of God eminently and causally: but some things are denied of God absolutely and in no way predicated of him; as for instance, God is not a body. In this way according to the Master's opinion it might be said that numeral quantity is altogether denied of God: and in like manner according to our own opinion when we say: The divine essence is one, we altogether deny that God's essence is divided.

Reply to the Third Objection. In created things numeral terms posit nothing in addition to the things to which they are affixed, except in so far as they signify something in the, genus of discrete quantity: in this way they are not predicated of God, and this pertains to his perfection.

Reply to the Fourth Objection. It is true that the unity and plurality signified by numeral terms predicated of God are not purely subjective but are really in God: and yet it does not follow that they signify something positive besides the things to which they are attributed.

Reply to the Fifth Objection. The good that is a kind of quality is not the good that is convertible with being. The latter adds nothing real to being, whereas the former adds a quality in respect of which a man is said to be good. The same applies to unity, as already explained; yet there is this difference that good in either sense can be predicated of God, whereas unity cannot: because as already explained the comparison between quantity and quality fails.

Reply to the Sixth Objection. Of these primary notions being is the first, wherefore it must be predicated positively: because negation or privation cannot be the first thing conceived by the intellect, since we cannot understand a negation or privation unless we first understand what is denied or lacking. But the other three must add something that is not a contraction of being: for if they contracted being they would no longer be primary notions. Now this is impossible unless that which they add were purely logical, and this is either a negation which is added by unity as already stated, or relation or something which by its very nature is universally referable to being: and this is either the intellect to which the true bears a relation, or the appetite to which the good bears a relation, for the good is what all things seek (Ethic. i, i).

Reply to the Seventh Objection. According to the Philosopher (Metaph. x) we speak of a number of things in two senses: first absolutely, and then number is the opposite of one: secondly comparatively, as denoting excess in relation to a smaller number, and then number is opposed to a few. In like manner magnitude may be taken in two ways: first absolutely, in the sense of a continuous quantity which is called a magnitude: secondly comparatively, as denoting excess in relation to a smaller quantity. In the first sense magnitude is not predicated of God but in the second, and denotes his eminence over all creatures.

Reply to the Eighth Objection. The unity that pertains to the trace of God in his creatures is the one that is convertible with being. As we have already stated this posits something, namely being, to which it adds nothing but a negation.

Reply to the Ninth Objection. One opposite does not exclude the other except from the subject of which it is predicated. For supposing that Socrates is white it does not follow that nothing is black, but that he is, not black. Wherefore if the person of the Father is one it follows that there are not several persons of the Father, but not that there are not more than one person in God.

Reply to the Tenth Objection. One is not a constituent of a number, on the side of privation, but inasmuch as it posits being.

Reply to the Eleventh Objection. Privation may be taken in three ways (Metaph. v, text. 27). First strictly, when a thing lacks that which by nature it should have, and when by nature it should have it: thus to lack sight is in a man privation of sight. Secondly in an extended sense, when a thing lacks that which is due not to its specific but to its generic nature: thus lack of sight may be called a privation of sight in a mole. Thirdly in a very broad sense, when a thing lacks that which may be naturally due to anything else but not to it, nor to any other member of its genus: thus lack of sight may be called a privation in a plant. This last kind of privation is a mean between real privation and simple negation, and has something in common with both. With real privation in that it is the negation of something in a subject, so that it cannot be predicated simply of

nonbeing: and with simple negation, in that it does not require aptitude in the subject. It is in this way that one denotes privation, and in this sense it can be predicated of God, like other things that can be predicated of God in the same way, as, for instance, invisible, immense and so forth.

Reply to the Twelfth Objection. Numerical terms add nothing to God besides the subject of which they are predicated. Hence when they are predicated of essentials they signify the essence, and when they are predicated of personal properties they signify the relations.

Reply to the Thirteenth Objection. One and being are convertible as to their supposites: yet one adds logically the privation of division and thus they are not synonymous, because synonyms are words which signify the same thing from the same point of view.

Reply to the Fourteenth Objection. One may be considered in two ways. First as to what it posits, and thus it is a constituent of number: secondly as to the negation which it adds, and thus it is opposed to number privatively.

Reply to the Fifteenth Objection. According to the Philosopher (Metaph. x), number precedes unity objectively, as the whole precedes its parts and the composite precedes the simple: but unity precedes number naturally and logically. But this seemingly is not sufficient in order that unity be opposed to number privatively. For privation logically is an afterthought, since in order to understand a privation we must first understand its opposite whence its definition is taken: unless perhaps this refer, merely to the definition of the term, in so far as one has a privative signification, while number has a positive meaning: since we name things according as we know them. Wherefore in order that a term have a privative signification it suffices that the thing signified come in any way whatsoever to our knowledge as an afterthought: although this is not enough to make the thing itself privative, unless it come afterwards logically. It would be better then to say that division is the cause of number and precedes it logically; and that one since it is undivided being is predicated privatively in relation to division, but not in relation to multitude. Hence division logically precedes being but number follows it: and this is proved as follows. The first object of the intellect is being; the second is the negation of being. From these two there follows thirdly the understanding of distinction (since from the fact that we understand that this thing is and that it is not that thing we realize that these two are distinct): and it follows fourthly that the intellect apprehends the idea of unity, in that it understands that this thing is not divided in itself; and fifthly the intellect apprehends number, in that it understands this as distinct from that and each as one in itself. For however much things are conceived as distinct from one another, there is no idea of number unless each be conceived as one. Wherefore there is not a vicious circle in the definitions of unity and number. And this suffices for the Reply to the Sixteenth Objection.

Reply to the Seventeenth Objection. The one which is a principle of number is compared to many as measure to the thing measured: and unity in this sense adds something positive to substance, as stated in the Article.

After what we have said the arguments on the other side present no difficulty to those who realize that they contain a certain amount of truth. We must, however, take notice of one point advanced in these objections, namely that these primary notions, essence, unity, truth and goodness denominate themselves inasmuch as one, true and good are consequent to being. Now seeing that being is the first object of the intellect, it follows that every other object of the intellect is conceived as a being, and therefore as one, true and good. Wherefore since the intellect apprehends essence, unity, truth and goodness in the abstract, it follows that being and the other three concretes must be predicated of them. Thus it is that they denominate themselves, whereas things that are not convertible with being, do not.

Q. IX: ARTICLE VIII

Is There Any Diversity in God?

[Sum. Th. I, Q. xxxi, A. 2]

THE eighth point of inquiry is whether there is diversity in God: and seemingly there is.

1. According to the Philosopher (Metaph. v) unity of substance makes things the same, multitude in substance makes things diverse. Now in God there is multitude of substance: thus Hilary says (De Synod.) that Father, Son and Holy Spirit “are three in substance, one in harmony.” Therefore there is diversity in God.

2. According to the Philosopher (Metaph. x) diversity is absolute, but difference is relative: wherefore all that differs is diverse, but not everything that is diverse is different. Now it is granted that there is difference in God, since Damascene (De Fid. Orth. iii) says: We acknowledge a difference between the persons arising from the three properties, namely Paternity, filiation and Procession. Therefore there is diversity in God.

3. Accidental difference only makes a thing other, but substantial difference makes another, i.e. a diverse, thing. Since then in God there is a difference, which must be substantial, seeing that it cannot be accidental, there must be diversity in him.

4. Number results from division, as stated above (A. 7, ad 15). Now where there is division there must be diversity. Therefore in God, since there is number, there must be diversity.

5. Identical and diverse are an adequate division of being. Now the Father is not the same as the Son, for it is not granted that in begetting the Son he begets God who is himself. Therefore the Son is diverse from the Father.

On the contrary Hilary says (De Trin. vii): In God nothing is new, nothing diverse, nothing foreign, nothing separable.

Again Ambrose says (De Trin.): Father and Son are one in Godhead, nor is there any substantial difference in them, nor any diversity whatsoever.

I answer that, as Jerome says, the careless use of terms leads to heresy: wherefore in speaking of God we must choose our words so as to avoid any occasion of error. Now about the divine nature there are two errors especially to be avoided by those who would discuss the unity and trinity of the Godhead: namely the error of Arius who denied the unity of the essence, and asserted a difference between the essence of the Father and that of the Son: and the error of Sabellius; who denied the distinction of the persons and asserted that the Father is the same as the Son. Accordingly to guard against the error of Arius there are four points on which we must be wary in confessing our belief. First, diversity which is incompatible with that unity of essence which we acknowledge when we profess our belief in one God; secondly, division which is incompatible with the divine simplicity; thirdly, inequality which is incompatible with the equality of the divine persons; fourthly, that we do not believe the Son to be alien to the Father, whereby we would deny their likeness. Again against the error of Sabellius four points call for caution. First, singularity which excludes communicability of the divine nature; secondly, the word only which excludes the real distinction of the persons; thirdly, confusion which excludes the order existing between the divine persons; fourthly, dissociation (*solitudo*) which excludes the fellowship of the divine persons. Accordingly against diversity we acknowledge unity of essence; against division simplicity; against inequality equality; against difference likeness; not one only but several persons; distinction against identity; order against confusion; and against dissociation the harmony and bond of love.

Reply to the First Objection. In the words quoted substance stands for hypostasis, not for essence, multiplication of which causes diversity.

Reply to the Second Objection. Although some doctors of the Church use the term difference in reference to God, it should not be employed as a general rule, or enlarged upon: because difference denotes a distinction of form, and this is impossible in God since God's form is his nature according to Augustine. But we must explain the term difference as standing for a distinction of the slightest kind: since some things are described as distinct in respect of a mere relation or even only logically. Again if we meet with the term diversity in connexion with God, we must explain it in the same way: for instance, if we find it stated that the person of the Father is diverse from that of the Son, we must take diverse to denote distinct. Yet in speaking of God we must be more wary of using the word diverse than the word different, because diversity refers more to an essential division: inasmuch as any multiplication whatsoever of forms causes a difference, whereas diversity arises only from substantial forms.

Reply to the Third Objection. Though there is no accident in God there is relation; and relative opposition causes distinction but not diversity in God.

Reply to the Fourth Objection. Though properly speaking there is not division in God, there is relative distinction, and this suffices to make a number of persons.

Reply to the Fifth Objection. The Son is the same God as the Father, yet it cannot be said that the Father in begetting the Son begot God who was himself; because himself being reciprocal indicates identity in the supposite: whereas in God Father and Son are two supposites.

Q. IX: ARTICLE IX

Are There Only Three Persons in God: Or Are There More Or Fewer Than Three?

[Sum. Th. I, Q. xxxi, A, i]

THE ninth point of inquiry is whether in God there are only three persons, or more or fewer than three. It would seem that there are more than three.

1. Augustine says (Con. Maxim. iii, 12): "The Son did not beget a creator, not that he could not but because it was unfitting." Now in God, just as in all perpetual things, there is no difference between the actual and the possible (Phys. iii, text. 32). Therefore the Son begot another Son: and thus there are two Sons in God, and consequently more than three persons.

2. To this it may be replied that the words he could not mean that it was not due to his inability.

On the contrary the acts belonging to a particular nature are appropriate to every supposite of that nature, except through inability to execute them. Now generation is an act pertaining to the perfection of the divine nature, otherwise it would not be appropriate to the Father, in whom there is nothing that is not perfect. If then the Son begets not another Son, this will, be because he is unable to do so.

3. If the Son cannot beget he can be begotten — and therefore he has the power to be begotten but not the power to beget. Since then to beget differs from being begotten and since powers are distinguished in reference to their objects, the Father's power will not be the same as the Son's: and this is heretical.

4. in things active and passive action and passion are reduced to different principles, since in creatures a thing acts by reason of its form and is patient by reason of its matter. Now to beget and to be begotten express action and passion. Therefore they must be referred to different principles: so that it cannot be the same power whereby the Father begets and the Son is begotten.

5. But to this it might be replied that it is the same power inasmuch as on either hand it is rooted in the divine essence which is one in Father and Son.

On the contrary the power to heat and the power to dry are rooted in one subject, namely fire: and yet they are not one and the same power, since heat which is the principle of calefaction is a distinct quality from dryness which is the principle of desiccation. Wherefore the unity of the divine essence does not suffice to make one the Father's power to beget and the Son's power to be begotten.

6. Every wise and intelligent subject forms a concept by his wisdom. Now the Son is wise and intelligent even as the Father. Therefore he has a concept. But the Father's concept is the Word which is the Son. Therefore the Son also has a Son.

7. To this it may be replied that word is predicated of God not only personally but also essentially, and thus the Word predicated essentially may be the concept of the Son.

On the contrary word denotes the species conceived and ordered for the purpose of manifestation, and thus it implies origin. Now those terms which indicate origin in God are predicated personally and not essentially. Therefore word cannot be predicated essentially,.

8. Anselm (Monalog.) says that “as the Father utters (dicit) himself, so do the Son and the Holy Spirit.” Now, as he says (ibid.), for the Father to utter himself is the same as to beget a Son. Therefore the Son begets another Son: and thus the same conclusion follows.

9. God is proved to beget from the fact that he bestows on others the faculty of begetting (Isa. lxvi, 9): Shall I that give generation to others be barren? saith the Lord. Now as the Father gives generation, even so does the Son: because the works of the Trinity are undivided. Therefore the Son begets a Son.

10. Augustine (Dial. ad Oros. lxv, 7) says that the Father begets the Son naturally: and Damascene (De Fide Orth. xxvii, 2) says that generation is a work of nature. Now the Father and the Son have the same nature. Therefore as the Father begets, so also does the Son: and consequently in God there are several Sons and more than three persons.

11. But someone will reply that there cannot be more than one Son in God since there can be but one filiation: because the form of one species is not multiplied otherwise than by division of matter, and there is no such thing in God.

On the contrary any difference whatsoever must naturally connote number. Now there can be more than one filiation, not only by reason of the matter but also because this filiation is thiswise and that filiation is thatwise. Therefore nothing prevents several filiations being in God, although there is no matter in him.

12. The Son proceeds from the Father as brightness from the sun, according to Hebrews i, 3, being the brightness of his glory. Now one brightness can produce another brightness. Therefore the Son can beget another Son: and thus there would be several Sons in God and more than three persons.

13. The Holy Spirit is the Father’s love of the Son. Now the Father also loves the Holy Spirit. Therefore there must be another Spirit whereby the Father loves the Holy Spirit and thus there will be four persons in God.

14. According to Dionysius (Div. Nom. iv) the good is self-communicative. Now goodness is appropriated to the Holy Spirit, as power to the Father and wisdom to the Son.

Therefore one would think it most appropriate to the Holy Spirit that he should communicate the divine nature to another person: and thus there will be more than three persons in God.

15. According to the Philosopher (Meteor. iv) a thing is perfect when it can of itself produce its like. Now the Holy Spirit is perfect God. Therefore he can produce another person: and consequently... etc.

16. The Son does not receive the divine nature from the Father more perfectly than the Holy Spirit. Now the Son receives from the Father the divine nature not only passively (so to speak) as being begotten of him, but also actively, because he can communicate the same nature to another. Therefore the Holy Spirit also can communicate the divine nature to another person.

17. Whatsoever belongs to perfection in creatures must be attributed to God. Now it belongs to perfection in creatures to communicate nature, although the mode of communication has a certain imperfection in that it involves division or change in the generator. Therefore to communicate the divine nature belongs to perfection in God, and consequently it must be attributed to the Holy Spirit. Therefore a person proceeds from the Holy Spirit, and thus it follows that there are more than three persons in God.

18. Just as the Godhead is a good in the Father, so also is paternity. Now from the fact that no good is possessed with pleasure without others sharing in it, some prove that in God there are several persons having the divine nature. Therefore for the same reason there are several Fathers, and several Sons and several Holy Spirits in God: and consequently more than three persons.

19. The Son and the Holy Spirit are seemingly distinguished from each other in that the Son proceeds from the Father by way of the intellect as his word, while the Holy Spirit proceeds by way of the will as his love. But there are other essential attributes besides the intellect and will, such as goodness, power and so forth. Therefore other persons proceed from the Father besides the Son and Holy Spirit.

20. Apparently the process of nature differs from the process of the intellect more than does the process of the will, inasmuch as in creatures the process of the intellect is always accompanied by that of the will, since whatever understands something also wills something: whereas the process of nature is not always accompanied by the process of intellect, thus not everything that can

generate can understand. If then in God the person who proceeds by way of the will as love is distinct from the person who proceeds by way of the intellect as word, there will also be a person who proceeds by way of the intellect distinct from the person who proceeds by way of nature as Son. Hence there will be three persons proceeding in God and one who does not proceed: and thus there are four persons.

21. In God the persons are multiplied on account of the subsistent relations. Now in God there are five relative notions, viz. paternity, filiation, procession, innascibility and common spiration. Therefore there are five persons in God.

22. The relations which are attributed to God from eternity are not in creatures but in God. Now whatsoever is in God is subsistent, since in him there is no accident. Therefore any relation that belongs to God from eternity is subsistent and consequently is a person. Now such relations are infinite in number: thus the ideas of creatures are in God from eternity, and they are not mutually distinct except by their relation to creatures. Therefore the persons in God are infinite in number.

On the other hand it would seem that there are fewer than three.

1. In one nature there is but one mode of communication of that nature: wherefore, according to the Commentator (Phys. viii), animals generated from seed are not of the same species as those engendered from corrupt matter. Now the divine nature is supremely one: wherefore it can be communicated in one way only. Therefore there cannot be more than two persons, one that communicates the Godhead in some particular way, and another that receives the Godhead in that same way.

2. Hilary (De Synod.) shows that the Son proceeds from the Father naturally because he is such as God is, but that creatures proceed from God according to his will, because they are such as he wishes them to be, not such as he is. Now the Holy Spirit, like the Son, is such as God the Father is. Therefore the Holy Spirit, like the Son, proceeds from the Father naturally; and consequently there is no distinction between the Holy Spirit and the Son through the Son proceeding naturally and the Holy Spirit not.

3. In God will and intellect differ not in nature but only logically: and consequently procession by nature, by intellect and by will differ but logically in God. Therefore if the Son and the Holy Spirit are distinguished through the one proceeding naturally and the other by the will, they will be but logically distinct: and they will not be two persons, since plurality of persons implies a real distinction.

4. The persons in God are distinct by relations of origin only. Now two relations suffice to indicate origin, namely one from whom is another, and one who is from another. Therefore there are but two persons in God.

5. Every relation requires two extremes. Since then in God the persons are not distinct save by the relations; it follows that in God there are either two relations, and consequently four persons; or one relation, and therefore only two persons.

On the contrary it is manifest that there are but three persons in God from 1 Jo. v, 7, There are three who bear witness in heaven: and if we ask "three what?" the Church replies: "Three persons," as Augustine says (De Trin. vii, 4). Therefore there are three persons in God.

Moreover for the perfection of divine goodness, happiness and glory there must be true and perfect charity in God: for nothing is better or more perfect than charity, as Richard says (De Trin. iii, 2). Now there is no happiness without enjoyment, and this arises chiefly from charity: for as we read (ibid. 5), "Nothing is sweeter than charity, nothing more enjoyable, the intellectual life affords no sweeter experience, or delight more exquisite." And the perfection of glory consists in the splendour of perfect communication, which is effected by charity. And true and perfect charity requires the trinity of persons in God. For the love whereby a person loves himself is selfish love and is not true charity. But God cannot love supremely another who is not supremely lovable; and none is supremely lovable that is not supremely good. Hence it is evident that true charity cannot be supreme in God if there be but one person in him. Nor can it be perfect if there be but two persons: since perfect charity demands that the lover wish that what he loves himself be equally loved by another. For it is a sign of great imperfection to be unwilling to share one's love, whereas to be willing to share it is a sign of great perfection: "The more one is pleased to receive a thing the greater our longing in seeking for it," as Richard says (ibid.). In God therefore, since there is perfection of goodness, happiness and glory, there must be a trinity of persons.

Again, as goodness is self-communicative, the perfection of divine goodness requires that he communicate his perfections supremely. But if there were only one person in God he would not communicate his goodness supremely: for he does not communicate himself supremely to creatures: and if there were but two persons, the delights of mutual charity would not be communicated perfectly. Hence there must be a second person to whom the divine goodness is perfectly communicated, and a third to whom the delights of divine charity are perfectly communicated.

Further, according to Augustine (De Trin. ix, 1, 2), three things are required for love, the lover, the beloved and love itself. Now the two who love each other are the Father and the Son: and the love that is their mutual bond is the Holy Spirit. Therefore there are three persons in God.

Again, as Richard remarks (De Trin. v, 6), in mankind it is to be observed that a person proceeds from persons in three ways: first, immediately only, as Eve from Adam: secondly, mediately only, as Enoch from Adam: thirdly, both immediately and mediately, as Seth from Adam, immediately as his son, mediately as the son of Eve who proceeded from Adam. Now in God one person cannot proceed from another mediately only, since there would not be perfect equality. Hence we must conclude that in God there is one person that does not proceed from another, i.e. the Father from whom two other persons proceed; one immediately only, i.e. the Son; and the other both mediately and immediately, i.e. the Holy Spirit, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. Therefore there are three persons in God.

Again, to both give and receive the fulness of the Godhead comes between giving and not receiving it, and receiving without giving it. Now it belongs to the person of the Father to give the fulness of the Godhead without receiving it: and to receive the fulness of the Godhead without giving it belongs to the person of the Holy Spirit. Therefore there must be a third person who both gives and receives the fulness of the Godhead: and this is the person of the Son: and thus there are three persons in God.

I answer that according to the opinions of heretics it is impossible to assign a definite number of persons in God. Arius took the trinity of persons to mean that the Son and Holy Spirit are creatures: and Macedonius was of the same opinion in regard to the Holy Spirit. Now the procession of creatures from God is not necessarily limited to a certain number, seeing that the divine power being infinite surpasses all mode, species and number of the creature. Wherefore if God the Father almighty created two super-excellent creatures, whom Arius stated to be the Son and Holy Spirit, there is no reason why he should not create others equal to them or even greater than they. Sabellius contended that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are only nominally and logically distinct: and here again it is evident that there would be an indefinite multiplication, inasmuch as our reason can consider God in an infinite number of ways in respect of his various effects, and give him various names. The Catholic faith alone which acknowledges unity of the divine nature in persons really distinct, can assign a reason for the trinity in God. For it is impossible that one simple nature be in more than one as principle: wherefore Hilary says (De Synod.) that whosoever acknowledges two innascibles in God must acknowledge two gods. Now the nature of one innascible God demands that we should acknowledge but one God. Hence certain philosophers asserted that in immaterial things there cannot be plurality except in respect of origin. For one nature can be equally in several subjects on account of the division of matter, which does not apply to God. Wherefore there cannot be in God more than one innascible person that does not proceed from another. Now if other persons proceed from him this must be by some action. Not, however, by an action passing into a subject outside the agent, as heating and cutting are the

actions of fire and saw, and as creation is the act of God himself: since then the proceeding persons would be outside the divine nature. It follows then that the procession of persons into the one divine nature is by reason of an action that does not pass into an extraneous subject but remains in the agent: and in the intellectual nature such actions are but two, to understand and to will. In each of these actions something is found to proceed when the action is performed. The action of understanding is not exercised without something being conceived in the mind of the one who understands, and this is called the word: since before a concept of some kind is fixed in the mind we are not said to understand but to think about a thing in order to understand it. In like manner the act of willing is exercised by love proceeding from the lover through his will, for love is simply the fixation of the will in the good that is willed. In creatures word and love are not subsistent persons in the nature that is endowed with intelligence and will: for a creature's acts of understanding and will are not its very being. Hence its word and love are accessories of and accidental to the understanding and willing creature. But seeing that in God, being, intelligence and will are one and the same, it follows of necessity that word and love in God are not accidents but subsist in the divine nature. For in God there is but one simple act of intelligence and one simple act of will, since by understanding his essence he understands all things, and by willing his goodness, he wills whatsoever he wills. Hence there is but one Word and one Love in God. Now the order of understanding and willing is not the same in God as in us. We receive our intellectual knowledge from external things: and by our will we tend to something external as an end. Wherefore our act of intelligence is according to a movement from things to the soul: but our act of will is according to a movement from the soul to things. On the other hand God does not acquire knowledge from things, but by his knowledge is the cause of things: nor by his will does he tend to anything external as his end, but he directs all external things to himself as their end. Accordingly both in us and in God there is a certain rotation in the acts of the intellect and will: for the will returns to that whence came the beginning of understanding: but whereas in us the circle ends in that which is external, the external good moving the intellect and the intellect moving the will, and the will by appetite and love tending to the external good; in God, on the other hand, the circle ends in him. For God, by understanding himself, conceives his word which is the type of all things understood by him, inasmuch as he understands all things by understanding himself, and from this word he proceeds to love of all things and of himself. Thus someone has said that a "monad engendered an atom and reflected its own beat upon itself." And the circle being closed nothing more can be added, so that a third procession within the divine nature is impossible, although there follows a procession towards external nature. Hence in God there must be but one person that does not proceed, and only two persons that proceed, one of whom proceeds as love, the other as word: and thus the persons in God are three in number.

In creatures a likeness to this trinity appears in three ways. First as an effect reflects its cause; and in this way the principle of the whole Godhead, i.e. the Father, is represented by that which holds the first place in the creature, namely by being in itself one subsistent thing. The Word is represented by the form of each creature; because in those things which are done by an intellectual agent the form of the effect derives from the concept of his intelligence. Love is represented in the order of creatures: because from the fact that God loves himself, he directs all things to himself in a certain order. Wherefore this likeness is called a vestigiary likeness in that

this bears the trace of the foot as an effect bears a trace of its cause. Secondly, by reason of a similar kind of operation: and thus it is represented in the rational creature alone who like God can understand and love himself, and consequently produces his own word and love: and this is called the likeness of the natural image; because in order that one thing be the image of another it must present a like species. Thirdly, on account of the unity of object, inasmuch as the rational creature understands and loves God: this is a kind of conformity of union that is found in the saints alone who understand and love the same thing as God understands and loves.

Of the first kind of likeness it is written (Job xi, 7) Peradventure thou wilt understand the steps of God? Of the second (Gen. i, 26) : Let us make man to our own image and likeness: and this is called the image of creation. Of the third it is written (2 Cor. iii, 18) : But we beholding the glory of the Lord with open face are transformed into the same image: and this is called the image of re-creation.

Reply to the First Objection. The reason why Augustine says that it is not true that the Son was unable to beget, but that it was not fitting for him to beget, is that it was not through inability that the Son does not beget: so that the words was unable must be taken privatively and not simply negatively, and the words it was not fitting indicate that the consequence would be unfitting if in God the Son were to beget another Son. How true this is may be considered in four ways. First, seeing that in God the Son proceeds as word, if the Son begot a Son it would follow that in God word proceeds from word: and this is impossible except in an inquiring and discursive intellect, wherein word proceeds from word when the mind proceeds from the consideration of one truth to the consideration of another: whereas this is nowise consistent with the perfection and simplicity of the divine intellect which at one glance sees all things at the same time. Secondly, because that which renders a thing individual and incommunicable cannot possibly be common to several: thus that which makes Socrates to be this particular thing cannot even be conceived as being in others besides. Hence if in God filiation were common to several (persons) it would not make the personality of the Son incommunicable, and thus the Son would have to be made an individual person by something absolute, and this is incompatible with the unity of the divine essence. Thirdly, because nothing that is one in species can be more than one except by reason of matter: for which reason there can be but one essence in God, because the divine essence is utterly immaterial. Now if there were several Sons in God there would also be several filiations, and consequently they would have to be multiplied according to matter subjected to them: and this is incompatible with the divine immateriality. Fourthly, because a man is a son as resulting from a process of nature. Now nature is confined definitely to one effect: except when by accident several effects are produced on account of the matter being divided: and consequently where nature is utterly devoid of matter, there can be but one son.

Reply to the Second Objection. A thing may be of this or that nature in two ways. First, as considered absolutely: and thus whatsoever belongs to a particular nature must be appropriate to every supposite of that nature: in this sense it is competent to the divine nature to be almighty,

creator and other similar attributes that are common to the three persons. Secondly, a thing belongs to a particular nature as considered in one particular supposite: and then whatsoever belongs to the nature does not necessarily belong to every supposite of that nature. Thus just as the generic nature includes something in one species which does not belong to another species (for instance, the sensible nature endows man with certain qualities with which it does not endow dumb, animals, such as a delicate sense of touch and memory and so forth); even so certain things belong to the specific nature in one individual, and not to another individual of the same species. For instance, it was peculiar to human nature considered as in Adam that it was not received by him through the natural process of generation, which does not apply to other individuals of human nature. In this way then the ability to beget belongs to the divine nature as in the person of the Father, precisely because the Father is not constituted an incommunicable person otherwise than by paternity which belongs to him as begetting: hence though the Son is a perfect supposite of the divine nature it does not follow that he can beget.

Reply to the Third Objection. Although the Father can beget whereas the Son cannot, it does not follow that the Father has a power which the Son has not: because in the Father and the Son it is the same power whereby the Father begets and the Son is begotten. For power is something absolute, wherefore it is not distinguished in God as neither is goodness nor anything else of the kind. On the other hand in God to beget and to be begotten do not denote something absolute, but merely a relation. Now opposite relations in God meet together in the one same absolute and do not divide it; thus it is clear that the one essence is in Father and Son; wherefore neither is power divided in God through being referred to begetting and being begotten. In fact not even in creatures does every difference of objects necessarily differentiate powers, but only when the objects differ formally within the same genus: thus the power of sight is not differentiated by seeing a man and seeing a horse, because these sensible objects do not differ qua sensible: and in like manner the absolute is not divided by the relative in God.

Reply to the Fourth Objection. In every action that passes from the agent into an extraneous thing there must be a principle in the agent whereby it is agent, and another principle in the patient whereby it is patient. But in the operation which does not pass into anything extraneous, but remains in the agent, only one principle is required: thus in order to will a principle is necessary on the part of the willer that enables him to will. Now in creatures generation is an operation passing into something extraneous, wherefore the active power in the generator must be distinct from the passive power in the generated. Whereas the divine generation is an operation that does not pass into anything extraneous but remains within; consisting as it does in the conception of the Word. Wherefore there is no need for distinct powers, active in the Father and passive in the Son.

Reply to the Fifth Objection. Heat and dryness considered in themselves are qualities; however, we may call them powers, inasmuch as they are principles of certain actions. Hence it is clear that although the primary and remote root, i.e. the subject, is but one, the proximate root which is the quality is not one.

Reply to the Sixth Objection. As the Father is God begetting and the Son God begotten, so must we say that the Father is wise and conceiving, while the Son is wise and conceived. Because the Son in that he is the Word is a conception of a wise being. But since whatsoever is in God is God it follows that the very conception of a wise God is God, is wise, is powerful and whatsoever is appropriate to God.

Reply to the Seventh Objection. Taken in its proper sense word cannot be attributed to God otherwise than personally: because in God there cannot be any origination but what is immaterial and consistent with an intellectual nature, such as the origination of word and love: wherefore if the procession of word and love is not enough to indicate a personal distinction, no distinction of persons will be possible in God. Thus John both in the beginning of his gospel and in his first epistle employs the term Word instead of Son, nor may we in speaking of God express ourselves in terms other than those of Holy Writ.

Reply to the Eighth Objection. Dicere may be taken in two senses. First strictly and then it means to utter a word: and in this sense Augustine (De Trin. vii) says that in God each person does not speak, but the Father alone. Secondly, in a broad sense in which to speak denotes intelligence: and thus Anselm (loc. cit.) says that not only the Father speaks but also the Son and the Holy Spirit: and though there are three who speak there is but one Word which is the Son: because the Son alone is the concept who understands and conceives the Word.

Reply to the Ninth Objection. That there is generation in God is not proved from the mere fact that God gives generation to others as efficient cause, since it would follow in like manner that there is motion in God because he gives motion to others. Generation is proved to be in God from the fact that he gives generation to others as both efficient and exemplary cause: and the Father is the exemplar of generation as begetting, while the Son is the exemplar as begotten: wherefore it does not follow that he begets.

Reply to the Tenth Objection. Generation is an operation of the divine nature as residing in the person of the Father, as we have already stated, hence it does not follow that it is appropriate to the Son.

Reply to the Eleventh Objection. Since filiation is a relation arising from a determinate mode of origin, i.e. according to nature, it is impossible that filiation differ from filiation formally; unless perhaps by reason of a difference of natures communicated by generation: thus we might say that the species of filiation whereby a particular man is a son differs from the species of filiation whereby a particular horse is a son. But in God there is but one nature, wherefore there cannot be

several formally different filiations: and it is evident that there cannot be several filiations differing in matter. Consequently in God there is but one filiation and one Son.

Reply to the Twelfth Objection. One brightness proceeds from another by the diffusion of light on to another subject: wherefore this is clearly due to a division of matter, which is impossible in God.

Reply to the Thirteenth Objection. A thing is loved in so far as it is good: hence since one and the same goodness is that of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the Father with the same love, which is the Holy Spirit, loves himself, the Son, the Holy Spirit and all creatures. Even so by the same Word, which is the Son, he utters himself, the Son, the Holy Spirit and all creatures.

Reply to the Fourteenth Objection. Goodness is something in which terminates the living being's operation that abides in the operator. First a thing is understood as true, and then is desired as good: and there the internal operation stops and rests as in its end. But from this point begins the process of external operation: because through the intellect's desire and love for that which it has already considered as good there follows an external operation towards that good. Wherefore from the very fact that goodness is appropriated to the Holy Spirit it is reasonable for us to conclude that the procession of the divine persons goes no further. What does follow, however, is the procession of creatures which is outside the divine nature.

Reply to the Fifteenth Objection. Of all lines the circle is the most perfect, because it admits of no addition. Hence this belongs to the perfection of the Holy Spirit that as it were he closes the circle of the divine origin, so that no addition is possible, as we have shown above.

Reply to the Sixteenth Objection. In the reception or communication of the divine nature there is no other difference but that arising from the relations and this difference cannot cause inequality of perfection because as Augustine says (Cont. Maxim. iii, 18), when we ask who Proceeds from whom, it is a question of origin, not of equality of inequality.

Reply to the Seventeenth Objection. Just as the communication of the divine nature by the Father to the Son belongs to their perfection, so the perfect reception of the communicated nature belongs to the perfection of the Holy Spirit: and both perfections differ not in quantity but only in respect of relation which does not constitute imperfection,

Reply to the Eighteenth Objection. As we have already observed, that which makes a person incommunicable cannot be common to many. Hence the result of sharing therein would be not enjoyment but the destruction of the distinction of the persons. Thus were the Father to have a

companion in the Godhead to share his paternity there would be a confusion of persons: and the same applies to filiation and procession.

Reply to the Nineteenth Objection. The other attributes have no intrinsic operation as the intellect and will have, whence could arise the procession of a divine person.

Reply to the Twentieth Objection. The process of nature and the process of the intellect have this in common that in either case one thing proceeds from one thing in likeness to that whence it proceeds. But love which proceeds from the will proceeds from two who love each other mutually: nor can we infer that because there is love there is a likeness of the lover. Wherefore in God the same (person) proceeds by way of nature and by way of the intellect, i.e. as Son and as Word: whereas it is another person that proceeds by way of the will as love.

Reply to the Twenty-first Objection. Although there are five notions in God there are but three personal properties constituting the persons: and therefore there are but three persons.

Reply to the Twenty-second Objection. The ideal relations in God refer to things outside, i.e. to creatures: and consequently they do not cause a distinction of persons in him.

We must also reply to the other arguments which would prove that there are fewer than three persons in God.

1. In every created nature there are many modes of procession, yet the specific nature is not communicated in each of them: and the reason of this is to be found in the imperfection of created nature, inasmuch as not everything of a created nature subsists in itself: thus the word that proceeds from a man's intellect is not subsistent, nor is the love that proceeds from his will: whereas the son who is begotten by an operation of nature subsists in human nature: wherefore this is the only way in which human nature is communicated, although there are several modes of procession. On the other hand whatsoever is in God is subsistent, wherefore in God the divine nature is communicated in every mode of procession.

2. There is no reason why something should proceed even naturally from the will: for the will naturally wills and loves something, viz. happiness and the knowledge of the truth. Hence there is no reason why the Holy Spirit should not proceed from the Father and the Son, although he proceeds by way of the will.

3. Although will and intellect do not differ in God except logically, he that proceeds by way of the intellect must be really distinct from him who proceeds by way of the will: because the Word which proceeds by way of the intellect proceeds from one only as from the speaker: while the Holy Spirit who proceeds by way of the will as love, must needs proceed from two who love each other mutually, or from one who speaks and his word. For nothing can be loved unless the intellect has first conceived it by its word. Hence he who proceeds by way of the will must proceed from him who proceeds by way of the intellect, and consequently must be distinct from him.

4. He that proceeds from another in God may do so in two ways, namely by way of word and by way of love. Hence to be from another in a general way is not enough to constitute an incommunicable person, and must be defined, in reference to that which is proper.

5. In God there are four relations and not only two: yet only three of them are personal, for one, namely common spiration, is not a personal property, seeing that it is common to two persons: and for this reason there are only three persons in God.

We grant the remaining arguments.